

JACK O'NEIL'S

FURTHER ADVENTURES
IN
HOLLAND



BY CUEY.NA.GAEL —

ROTTERDAM — J.M. BREDEE.

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IN HOLLAND.

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THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF O'NEILL IN HOLLAND

BY

CUEY-NA-GAEL,

Author of "An Irishman's Difficulties in speaking Dutch",
"Ireland, its Humour and Pathos".



ROTTERDAM
J. M. BREDÉE.

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CHAPTER I.

WHERE DID O'NEILL'S DUTCH COME FROM?

We had all heard something of Jack O'Neill's adventures in Holland; and the members of our informal little club in Trinity College Dublin were positively thirsting for fresh details. There must be much more to tell, we felt sure; and we had a multitude of questions to ask. Now the queer thing about O'Neill was that he didn't like to be interrogated; he preferred to tell his story straight through in his own way. He had evidently studied hard at the Dutch language, but without the least regard for system; and it was clear that he had been by no means careful in the choice of text books. Indeed, he seemed to be rather sensitive on this point, no doubt regretting that, in the ardour of his early enthusiasm, he had just taken

the first grammar and exercise-book he could lay his hands upon, without consulting anybody. It was that curious plan of doing everything by himself that doubtless led him into the initial mistake, that of trying to get any sense out of "Boyton and Brandnetel".

At least, so it seemed to us; and we surmised that, when he discovered how odd a work he had happened upon, he was too high minded to discard it completely, as he should have done. Apparently he had kept that "literary find" by him for reference, and for digging stray idioms and rules out of, while he added more modern volumes to his working stock. This would account for his glibness in rattling off out-of-the-way phrases, and for that rich bizarre flavour which his simplest Dutch utterance undoubtedly had.

But we didn't know the worst.

Intentionally vague though he was in talking about his authorities, we ran him to earth (so to speak) at last, in the matter of "Boyton and Brandnetel"; and had a happy evening.

That book was all O'Neill told us, and more. Printed on paper that seemed a cross between canvass and blot-sheet, it bore the date 1805. It

was very Frenchified, and the English puzzled us extremely. Here is the Preface — or a part of it.

The following **WORK** was, originally, compiled by William Boyton. After passing five Editions, a Sixth appeared partly enlarged, and partly improved, by Jac. Brandnetel. This last Edition was published, at the Hague, in the Year, 1751. The **PRESENT**, which may be considered a Fourth Edition, was undertaken, at the urgent **ENTREATY**, of the Bookseller and Proprietor, of the **WORK**.

The present Editor, adverting to the change the improvement of both **Dialects** has introduced, since the last publication of the **WORK**; was prevailed upon to engage in **Revising**, **Correcting**, and greatly **Enlarging**, it.

In the Preface of Mr. Boyton, it is remarked, that, he had “remarked, the great superfluity of matter, in other Tracts of this Kind; and how tedious, nay, almost impossible, it is, for **Beginners**, to learn such a number of rules, as **Grammars**, in General, have been clogged with; that, considering nothing, of any Value, had been said concerning the Gender of **Nonns**; and the use of the **Particles**, **de** and **HET**; which are the principal **Stumbling-Block** to

the English''. But, the present Editor of this Essay begs leave to submit to Public Opinion. Whether is it not possible to be too concise?

Every extreme ought, carefully, to be avoided. Therefore, he has endeavoured to observe a Medium.

Several typographical Errors have been traced. A list of these has been collected; and pointed out, how to be corrected; which Learners are requested, when they occur, to do so, with the PEN.

By the publication of this WORK, we hope to fulfil the wish of many an Englishman, who desires, to find, a practical Grammar; by which the means of acquiring the dutch, are simplified and facilitated.

The several particles, of Speech, are arranged by the usual Order; and Declare with precision; every rule being followed, with practical exercise. This Mode, of teaching, being already appreciated; it will not be deemed Essential; nor do we, point out the utility of it. As to Syntax; it is fully treated; whilst, last not least, cares have been exercised, to unite, ease with simplicity, accuracy with idiom, and animate the Learner. It aims at

the pupil of High-Life and to acquire the Polish of the civilized Lady."

THE HAGUE, 1805.

This brilliant introduction raised our Expectations to fever heat. We had never encountered such an army of commas before; and as for the English — !

Anything, evidently, might be met with inside the covers of William Boyton's 'Work'.

CHAPTER II.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COMPENDIOUS GUIDE TO THE DUTCH LANGUAGE.

There was something good on every page, as might be expected from such a preface. And, withal, there was a steady process of boasting about its own merits (as a Tract or Essay) that was most refreshing in the barren realm of grammar.

With mock modesty it dubbed itself on the title page, "the Compendious Guide," and followed this up with another title page "*Korte Wegwijzer tot de nederduitsche taal, nagezien, verbeterd en vermeerderd.*" The whole compilation was evidently the work of several generations of literary gentlemen, who aimed at the 'Polish of the Civilized Lady' in quite different ways, but whose united efforts certainly made 'The Work' very incoherent here and there.

We all quizzed O'Neil unmercifully about the Civilized Lady, and read some dialogues with immense satisfaction. So uproarious, indeed, did the fun become at last, that our neighbours on the stair came trooping in. Three of them were Cape-students, hard-working medicals, whom we never heard speaking Dutch, though we were well aware they must have known it. Like the others, they insisted on a full explanation of the tumult, and we showed them "Boyton". They didn't mind so much about the Civilized Lady; but when they turned to the Polite Dialogues at the end, and glanced at "*Tusschen een arts (geneesheer) en een zieke*" and "*Om met een Kleedermaker te spreken*" and especially at "*tusschen twee heeren, wegens den aard der planten*", a kind of shudder seemed to pass through them, as if they had got an electric shock — till finally they dropped the book and screamed with delight.

"Why! that's nothing so very odd", said O'Neill, looking hurt. "I have often used lots of those phrases." Picking up the dishevelled leaves from the floor, he ran his eye down a page or two and said: "Yes, of course. These things are all right: A bit stiff and bookish, perhaps; but correct, quite

correct. You fellows needn't be so excited over nothing."

"Read us some!" clamoured the men from the Cape. "Read us some of the dialogues you imitated. Go on! Read!"

"Oh! said O'Neill, "almost any one of these conversations about common things is good enough. Here, for instance." And he took the book in his hand and walked about the room, giving us first the English — then the Dutch.

"TOUCHING BUYING AND SELLING.	WEGENS KOOPEN EN VERKOOPEN.
----------------------------------	--------------------------------

Have you any fine hats? Do you choose a Castor (a Beavor).	Hebt gij mooije hoeden? Verkiest gij een' Kastoor te hebben?
--	--

This is one of the finest in the Country.	Daar is een van de fraaiste in 't land.
--	--

Yes, Sir; this is a dread- fully nice one.	Ja, hoedemaker; deze ten- minste is ijselijk mooi.
---	---

What does it cost? I cannot bid: I will not give so much.	Hoe veel moet hij gelden? Ik kan niet bieden; ik wil zoo veel niet besteden.
---	--

Excuse my mentioning it; but you are rather exorbitant.	Ik maak u mijn compli- menten; maar wij zijn nog niet eens.
---	---

I am sorry we cannot agree. Het doet mij leed dat wij het niet eens kunnen worden.

Just come close to the fire, Sir; and examine that hat narrowly. Eilieve! kruip bij het vuur, mijnheer; en bezie dien hoed eens wel."

"That conversation," said the Professor, "must have been of immense help to you now in modern Holland?"

"Hm — Gewisselijk," replied Jack doubtfully.

"O'Neill," said I; "Stop! You're making that out of your head. That stuff's never in any book."

"Well," was the hasty reply; "I see this isn't so good as some parts — not so practical, perhaps; but that's all here. Wait a bit.... Now listen. Here's something better. Hush!"

"BETWEEN TWO TUSSCHEN TWEE
ENGLISH GENTLEMEN. ENGELSCH HEEREN.

My dear Friend, I am extremely happy to see you. Waarde Vriend! ik ben ten uiterste verheugd u te zien (bezigtigen, of a house.)

How do all our Friends in London do? Hoe varen alle onze vrienden te Londen?

They will be glad to hear that you are still alive.

What do you mean? Have patience, you shall hear.

Patience is always useful

It has been reported for a certainty that you were taken by the Turks and murdered halfway between Leghorn and Civita Vecchia.

But these atrocities did not befall me.

You are convinced it is not true?

I am.

I rejoice to hear of your escape.

I am sensible of your

Zij zullen verblijd zijn te hooren dat gij nog in 't leven zijt.

Wat beteekent dat?

Heb geduld, gij zult het hooren.

Het geduld is altijd nuttig.

Men heeft voor de waarheid verteld (als eene zekerheid verhaald) dat gij van de Turken genomen waart en vermoord halfwege tuschen Livorno en Civita Vecchia.

Maar deze gruweelen zijn mij niet gebeurd.

Gij zijt overtuigd dat zulks onwaar is?

Gewisselijk.

't Verheugt mij ook te hooren dat gij 't gevaar ontkomen zijt.

Ik ben gevoelig voor

goodness.

Uwe goedheid.

I rejoice that you are
restored.

Ik verheug mij dat gij
heelemaal hersteld zijt
geweest (of a building:
geheel en al gerestau-
r eerd geworden)."

There was a noise in the room at this, but
O'Neill went on boldly to finish the Dialogue.

"Are you speaking in jest? Gekt gij ermede?

I do not jest.

Ik gek er niet mede."

"That's enough — quite enough — for the pre-
sent", said the Cape men, "We'll borrow the
Wegwijzer from you, and bring it back it safe.

"No, there's no fear we'll mislay it, or harm it.
Much too valuable for that. But — you'll excuse
us; we can hardly believe you've got that actually
in print. And we're curious to know what kind
of rules those learned grammarians give. You'll
lend us this mine of wisdom for a few days, won't
you? Thank you, so much.

"We'll promise to report all the gems we find.
I see you 've been marking the choice sentences
yourself!"

"Hush" interposed O'Neill, "do wait. Just a minute.

"Let me finish the 'Dialogue between English gentlemen', and you may have The Work.

"I'm just coming to the nice part of that conversation — you know about being murdered at Civita Vecchia, and all that — Or shall I go back over a bit of it?" he sank his voice to a half whisper, "for the sake of the thread of — ?

"Go on", said the company vehemently.

"Well: 'Gektgij er mede? ik gek erniet mede' that's where we were. Now give your whole mind to what follows. The first Englishman says: "Ik bid U, mijnheer; laat mij geene onheusheid begaan." Then the other, the man who had been so disappointed that his friend wasn't murdered, answers politely: "Ik weet zeer wel welke eerbied ik U schuldig ben."

This elicited the still friendlier remark from the returned traveller: "Mijnheer, ik wil liever eene onbeleefdheid begaan dan U lastig vallen."

Up to this moment the two acquaintances seemed to have got on fairly well together in spite of some difficulties. Why two Englishmen when they met in Paris about the year of grace 1805 should plunge into a complimentary dialogue in Dutch, in not very clear. But that there

was a lurking feeling of antagonism in the gossip's mind towards his compatriot, seems to be shown by the remark that he now makes to wind up the dialogue.

"Mejuffrouw, ik bid U duizendmaal om verschooning, indien ik heden eenige onheusheid ontrent U bega."

That was final. The returned traveller hasn't a word for himself, after he is called 'mejuffrouw.'

"Mind you, gentlemen," continued O'Neill, holding Boyton aloft like a trophy, "if I did try to stop too prolonged conversations in that complimentary foreign fashion, I had caught the trick of it from Brandnetel himself. You have only to go on heaping civilities on your wearisome talker's head, but take care to call him, just once, Mejuffrouw, and he'll have to go. It's a neat way of saying Good-bye. I never found the method to fail.

And I've tried it more than once."

CHAPTER III.

HOW O'NEILL LEARNED TO PRONOUNCE.

"I never could quite understand," said Bart van Dam, the big Cape giant, who had carried off Boyton the week before, "how O'Neill managed, out of such an extraordinary book, to pick up anything of the pronunciation. For, as a matter of fact, he does get quite close to some of the sounds; and I can nearly always guess what he is trying to say. When he is talking about that interesting Rotterdam street, the Boompjes, he doesn't make the first part rhyme with the English word loom, and then add cheese, a thing I have heard Britishers do who should have known better. And actually, I have noticed he can distinguish goed, groot, goot. That's promising. Some of my British friends at the Cape, even after I

graduated on English Literature and History, used kindly to drop Dutch words into their conversation, either to make it easy for me, or to keep up my spirits, so to speak. Oh never a talk of over five minutes, but little familiar terms like *taal*, *zolder*, *maar*, and so on, would begin to be showered in, here and there. One of these linguists had taken me into his own back garden, (he was very fond of animals of all kinds and we had gone out to inspect those he had) when he began to explain the new improvements on his premises.

We got into a deep discussion on the right way of draining a flat roof. "Come here", said he, at last. "Look up there, and you'll see a goat of mine running all round the open space!" "Goat!" I exclaimed; "it'll fall!" "Nonsense," he said, "not unless lightning strikes it. Firm as a rock! Now, isn't that the right sort of goat to carry the water off?" He thought he had said *goot* in Dutch! Well now, Jack's beyond that. Who had been coaching him?

Naturally I turned up Boyton on pronunciation the very first thing at home — and the mystery was solved! I was amazed. Boyton excels in teaching the sounds. Here is an extract or two from his

REMARKS ON THE DUTCH PRONUNCIATION.

A has a broader sound than in English, e. g. bal.

A in the word hand is not the same in both Dialects (He always calls English 'a Dialect'; here Dutch is a Dialect, too).

A A has a broader sound, e. g. aam, aal.

A A I and A A U sound broad, as in graanwen, to snarl (Boyton is immeasurably fond of words like graanw, kef, kweel; gier, hĳg, suis; and krij sch),

A E is used in place of A A; but this spelling is not followed.

A I is heard in Kaizer; but this is obsolete.

E sometimes approaches the sound of English ea as in speld, a pin. This is seldom correct. It is more like e in then. But this must be heard. It is improper (he evidently means incorrect) to say E E resembles EA in English e. g. zeemeeuw, kreeft, also veel.

E U is described as resembling eu in Enrope. For the falsity thereof, let the word be pronounced by a Native, and the Mistake will be felt.

- G is a guttural letter difficult to an Englishman; it can only be acquired by hearing it from a Civilized Native, e.g. gierig and gijzelen. Also geven.
- I never has the sound of Y (Fine restraint about this).
- I E has some similarity to those letters in the English Dialect; but is never the same, e.g. bier.
- O is pronounced differently — sometimes broad; in other words it is not so broad (e.g. hond) in others a hard sound e.g. wol. Only a native can distinguish.
- O O I occurs in mooi and gooi; and has a broad sound.
- U U No Englishman can emit this sound. It may be well heard in vnur (fire) and in gunr. Consult a Dutch Instructor.
- E U This sound is beyond the powers of the unassisted English Organs of Speech. It must first be heard (e.g. denr, stenr) from an educated Hollander.
- U I It is improper to make this identical with oy as in boy; (e.g. gnit, muis, and lni); the native pronunciation must be followed.

There you have some of the Rules! They won't

lead you far wrong, in any case. Then, to crown all, for fear the diligent reader wouldn't have caught the point yet, Boyton goes back to his favourite "Doctrine of the Native." Here it is:

These remarks on Dutch Pronunciation might, perhaps, have been dispensed with, without the smallest inconvenience, to the English Student of the Language. The present Editor of the Work, in which they were, originally, introduced, by no means, intends, as must be collected from his observations on them, to convey any adequate idea of pronunciation, but to place the learner on his guard against receiving wrong references, and to direct him to an Instructor, or Native, whose Dialect it is, for the sound peculiar to each letter.

Bravo, Boyton!

Three kinds of Natives he recommends the beginner to consult. He has them arranged in a sort of ascending scale — the civilized, the intelligent and the polite.

The two former classes will help you with the pronunciation, or with Het.

From the latter you get idioms.

CHAPTER IV.

AN INTERLUDE AND AN APPLICATION.

"So our friend Jack had to ask always for the sounds of the words. That would be right good for him", said Bart, "and should have made his talk intelligible."

"Well of course it did," said O'Neill. "They always understood the words I used. It was the applications I made that hampered them."

"I had great trouble with a chatty old gentlemen in the tram one morning going down to Scheveningen. It was just seven — I was hurrying to get an early dip, and he seemed bent on the same errand."

Attracted by my blazer and towel he opened conversation about sea-bathing, and then proceeded

to discourse on the beauties of the landscape. He seemed chilled by the poverty of my adjectives, though I worked them vigorously.

“Deze weg vin je zeker wel mooi?” he said at last, looking up at the arched green overhead. “Of houd U niet van de natuur?”

“Ja, zeker wel”, I hastened to assure him. “Ik houd er erg van — Het is prachtig! Net een tunnel van geboomte — van loofgroen.”

Then observing the pleasure my encomiums gave him, I ventured on something a little more lofty and poetic. My landlady had occasionally talked about a “canopy”, which, so far as I had understood her, I took to mean the vast cupola of hangings over the old-fashioned bed in my lodgings. She used to say that the canopy was new and beautiful, and needed constant dusting.

I had always agreed to this, but never dreamt of hunting up a word that to all intents and purposes seemed the same as in English.

“Indrukwekkend schoon,” I added. “Wij zitten, als het ware, onder een canopey (that was my landlady’s pronunciation) van bladeren.”

“Een kanapé, mijnheer?”

“Ja,” said I, “een verheven canopy, niet waar? Wij zeilen onder een groene canopy — verbazend — magnifique!”

“Hoe bedoeld U dat?” said the old gentleman more and more puzzled, and determined to find out my meaning.

“Wij zitten hier, niet waar?” I began slowly; then pointing to the roof of green over our heads, I explained: “dat alles vormt een prachtige canopy boven ons heen. Zeker wel?”

“Ik geloof het niet”, said the chatty old gentlemen. “De tram lijkt ook niet op een kanapé; of meent U dat?”

“De tram niet” I exclaimed, “maar de boomen; kijk; het gebladerte, het geboomte en de hooge dak dat ze maken — dat alles zoo schitterend groen, dat is, mijns bedunkens, niets dan een canopy, uitgehangen zoo te spreken, over ons heen, in uitgestrekte schoonheid.”

The old gentleman surely was a little dull. He said, “Ik begrijp niet goed wat u zegt. Waar is de canapé? Of bedoelt U soms een badstoel — op het strand?”

"Nee", I answered with a deprecating smile; "Ik sprak maar poetisch. Verheven", I added with a wave of my towel towards the greenery overhead.

"Hé," said he with friendly interest, "bent U een dichter? Ik had U voor een schilder gehouden," he explained with a glance at my blazer.

"Ik — een dichter!" I returned modestly. "Neen; niet erg. Op een kleine schaal, misschien." On a small scale, I meant to say; but I must have mangled the sch badly, for he didn't catch the point, and I heard him mutter: "Een sjaal! een sjaal, EN een kanapé!!"

"Ja zeker, mijnheer," I reasoned; "U ziet het zelf voor U — daar onder de boomen — dat IS hier een canopy —"

"Pardon", he interrupted, "dat is niet waar. Dat zijn gewone houten banken," he persisted argumentatively. "En wat bedoelt U met een sjaal?"

How pertinacious the old gentleman was! He stuck to me like a leech. I couldn't shake him off; and we were still far off the Kurhaus.

It was clearly a case for Boyton's conversational method.

"Mejuffrouw!" I said firmly, leaning towards him,

“niet zaniken! Ik ken Uwe edelmoedigheid genoeg.
U zijt onnadenkelijk verplichtend.”

The chatty old gentleman got off at the next
h a l t e.

CHAPTER V.

THE 'COMPENDIOUS GUIDE' ON DUTCH SYNTAX.

Boyton's monograph on pronunciation is his finest piece of work. He never quite reaches that level elsewhere; and, if he is destined after a hundred and fifty years to achieve a name, it had better rest on his 'Doctrine of the Native' than on his Syntax.

So van Dam assured us, when our little party met in his room the week before Christmas. We had all been busy; but busy or not, the Cape men found time to skim over Boyton's entertaining paragraphs, as, indeed, we guessed, from the frequent guffaws and readings that reached us from time to time through the closed doors. To night we had accepted an invitation to supper, before the holidays; and we were to hear his views on O'Neill's

'Guide, Philosopher and Friend', Boyton, in other words the 'Wegwijzer tot de nederduitsche taal'. Long since Jack had, indeed, got other and more modern manuals of Dutch, so that he was supposed to look now with a certain contempt on his former monitor: but the "compendious guide" had laid the basis of his erudition, and he had still a sneaking regard for its honest old pages.

What we wanted, indeed, was stories from Jack himself: but we had exhausted the more dramatic of these; and to get the fine aroma of the others — there were still many others — we thought some acquaintance with the compendium's syntax was essential.

Van Dam had undertaken to put us up to any niceties he had been struck with.

The first thing he told us was that Boyton had no clear ideas of any sort, and never laid down any definite rule. This lent him a certain diffidence in regard to most points, — a diffidence which in the case of HET became positive fright. At the first mention of *de*, *Het*, and an adjective, he gives as much encouragement as he can.

It is not much.

Here a difficulty, on its first aspect, seemingly, insur-

mountable, occurs to an Englishman, namely, in acquiring the right use of these Particles. The difficulty becomes the greater from no sufficient rules having been exactly laid down for his direction: but experience has proved that it is not *insurmountable*.

Here is a fine piece of explanation:

This is certain, that all Nouns, to which the Particles, *het*, *dat*, or *dit*, are added are of the Neuter Gender; on this account, the *e* final, in the Adjectives, when joined with such words, is, generally, rejected: For, saying *het*, *dat* or *dit* *paard*, *het*, *dit*, or *dat* *huis*; *het*, *dit*, or *dat* *schip*; *het*, *dat* or *dit* *kind*; it is said, *een sterk paard*, *a strong horse*; *een hoog huis*, *a high house*; *een groot schip*, *a great ship*; *een mooi kind*, *a fine child*; and not, *sterke paard*, *hooge huis*, *groote schip*, *mooije kind*. It is, farther, to be observed, that, though it is said, *die* or *deze* *vogel*; *de*, *die*, or *deze* *pen*; never is it said, *een snel vogel*, *een stijf pen*, but *een snelle vogel*, *a swift bird*; *eene styve pen*, *a stiff pen*. Even this rule admits of an exception.

When Boyton is labouring under strong emotion, the effect is always to increase the number of commas, colons, and other stops.

His agitation may also be traced in the way he harks back to any fundamental rule that he has

already discussed *ad nauseam*. In the concluding paragraph about the nouns, when he has said everything he knew, very fully, he adds that

it becomes necessary here, to suggest this General Rule; That those Nouns which have the Particle *de* before them, and whose Accusative is formed in *den* are of the Masculine Gender; as, *berg, a hill; boom, a tree; vogel, a bird.*

It is quite pathetic to note how he pleads for *de* as the nominative, and urges on his readers to reserve their *dezen* and *dien* and *den* for the accusative.

N.B. In this manner, Adjectives must be distinguished in the Genders. Because, in speaking and in vulgar writing, this distinction is not strictly adhered to; not a few, perhaps, adding, in the Nominative Case, especially to the Particle, *de*, or, *die*; this is no rule but remains a great error, which the best Authors carefully avoid. It is good Dutch to say: *ik zag dien braven man gisteren, I saw that honest man yesterday*; but it is very bad Dutch, — whatever custom may have introduced in some places; to say — *dien braven man heeft het gezegd.*

Take some gems at random.

N.B. Prepositions are that part of speech, which are so called because they are, commonly, put before the words, which are subsequent to them, and express the relation of the connection between them, eg. *ten, onder, and ondanks*.

N.B. The ablative is, frequently, used with the Prepositions *ten, or ter*; as *ik zag hem ten hove; ter goeder ure in a good hour*.

N.B. In Vulgar speaking or writing, *haar* is used promiscuously with regard to Men and Women; but the best authors restrict it to Women, or to Nouns of the Feminine Gender.

N.B. Most Adverbs may be distinguished from adjectives by this rule: If a substantive is added after them, they will make nonsense; whereas, being joined to an Adjective or a Verb, they will make good sense.

E.G. *Een desgelijks man, een verscheidenlijke vrouw, but zekerlijk waar.*

As he works out on a broad scale with six cases like Latin, he has pages of this sort of thing:

Singular.

Nom. *Een bemind man, or, de beminde man, a or the beloved man.*

Gen. *Eens, or, des beminden mans, of the beloved man.*

Dat. Aan eenen, *or* aan den eenen, *or* den beminden man, *to the beloved man.*

Acc. Een, *or* den beminden man, *the beloved man.*

Voc. O beminde man! *O beloved man.*

Abl. Van eenen, *or* van den beminden man, *from the beloved man.*

"The vocatives were very effective, 'O vliegende vogeltjes!' and 'o verwoestende volkeren!' being especially fine.

"And, by the way, that reminds me. I discovered a regular Hunnebed in one of the pages."

"A what?" said the Irishmen with one gasp.

"Ah, you wouldn't understand," said Bart.

"But you know the Goths and Huns and Vandals, don't you? Well what do you say to finding a whole troop of them buried in this precious volume?"

"Well; let them loose!" said the first year's man — "unless they're defunct."

"They're not!" returned Bart.

"Here they come, both males and females:

Singular.

Nom. Hun, Hunne, Hun, and Haar, Hare,
Haar, *their.*

Gen. Huns, Hunner, Huns, *and* Haars, Harer, Haars, *of their*, or *their's*.

Dat. Hunnen, Aan hunne, Aan hun, *and* Haren, Aan hare. Aan haar, *to their*.

Acc. Hunnen, Hunne, Hun, *and* Haren, Hare, Haar, *their*.

Abl. Van hunnen, Van hunne, Van hun, *and* Van baren, Van hare, Van haar, *from their. Plural.*

Nom. Hunne, *and*, Hare, *their*.

Gen. Hunner, *or*, Van hunne, *and*, Harer, *or*, Van hare, *of their*.

Dat. Hunnen, Aan hunne, *and*, Hare, Aan hare, *their*.

Acc. Hunne, Hare, *their*.

Abl. Van hunne, Van hare, *from their*.

Hun is of the Masculine and Neuter, *Haar* is properly of the Feminine Gender: but, in common speech and vulgar writing, *hare*, &c, are used as Masculine.

"Hurrah!" said the first-year's man. "It's like Football without rules."

"Would it be Vandalism now to cut out the page and frame it?" suggested the Professor.

"Yes; do that," clamoured half a dozen men, "and

hang it in O'Neill's bedroom, and label it 'Garden Party of Dutch Huns, imported by O'Neill.'

"No, no"; cried the Medicals, "call it 'Culture of Hun Bacilli. Magnified twelve diameters.'"

"What I admire most," said van Dam handing back The Work to O'Neill, "is the elasticity of the rules. He says, for instance, that you can render I know by ik weet, and on the whole he is inclined to recommend that way of it. But he never commits himself.

"It must be also admitted that there are other authors of good standing who employ the Subjunctive form where we might expect the Indicative and who say IK WETE, I know." That's one of his rules.

As a matter of fact there is no finality about anything in these pages. O'Neill, you were in training for a poet when you took up this book. I confess I should have liked to hear you going over your fifteen classes of irregular verbs, on the model (say) of ik graauw, ik kef en ik kweel, on even of ik krijsch, ik piep en ik lieg.

There is a rich profusion of tenses too in Boyton. He needn't have apologized for being too simple

when he furnishes you with four ordinary optatives and four future optatives. Fancy eight optatives in a modern language!

Present, — Preter-Imperfect, — Preter-Perfect, Preter-Pluperfect are bad enough; but those Future optatives are killing!" —

"Read them", said Jack, "I don't know that I remember them, quite."

"Well you ought to; for you have them well marked. I rather fancy these Passives.

First Future: Als ik genepen zal worden.

Second Future: Indien ik genepen zou worden.

Third Future: Toen ik genepen zal geworden zijn.

Fourth Future: Schoon ik genepen zou geworden zijn.

Why even your Active Voice would be simply grand in the optative, if you take it with any of those favourite verbs.

Hoewel ik gegrauwde hebbe, or Indien Gij-(lieden) gekweeld haddet, Schoon zij gekeft zouden hebben!

I cannot imagine anything finer in the realm of grammar than that, or more impressive to the casual auditor. If you ground out these paradigms with any

frequency along the public ways, I don't wonder that you achieved a reputation for a singular kind of learning. But — to quote from your manual — “ik moet u andermaal verschooning vragen, om niet verder in bijzonderheden omtrent de spraakkunst in 't algemeen en over de moderne talen in 't algemeen en over de nederduitsche taal in 't bijzonder, te treden, mijne tegenwoordigheid t'huis noodig zijnde.” I'll not insult your intelligence by venturing on a translation; but really I'd like you to explain a bit of this English to me. Just in front of his lists of words and Polite Dialogues, Boyton — or is it Brandnetel? — breaks into a pyrotechnic display of rhetoric.

Here it is, page 108:

§ N. B. Mark Well.

Long experience has convinced the Editor of the Present Work, that it is necessary the Learner acquire, as much as possible, and as soon as he has attained some knowledge, of the right pronunciation of the letters, an acquaintance with the VOCABULARY. Therefore, the VOCABULARY now follows. To consult his ease in committing words to memory, the general, or usual, method has, purposely, been avoided.

However accurate, and even necessary, the method alluded to, may, and must be, accounted; it must be owned, at the same time, that it is discouraging, to have a profusion of words presented, which, imperceptibly, may be acquired from the knowledge of a few, leading to progress in the language; of course, gradually, to the knowledge of all.

By having a lesser, or, consistent with the title of this work, a compendious, VOCABULARY, or DICTIONARY, of words, the Learner is enabled to proceed, in his study of the language, by applying the rules of Grammar, already laid down and exemplified, to those words he has learned; which he will find conducive to a capacity, of proceeding, in the same intelligent manner, in respect of every other word, he may acquire the knowledge of, from observation, in HEARING or READING.

“Ha!” said the Philosopher “a gem truly! Give that at the Fellowship Examination to have turned into Latin verse, and every classical man is floored!

“The hardest chorus of the Agamemnon is child’s play to that.

"Luctor nec emergo, you ought to write at the bottom of that page."

"You may jest as you like about Boyton", interrupted Jack; "but I tell you it's a book that has points. Do you know it once helped me to save a lady's life?"

"Save a lady's life!" said the Professor and the Philosopher in one breath. "We'll withdraw all we've said, if you'll prove to us, now, that the 'Compendious Guide' was ever the least good to any human being."

"Tell your adventure in your own way, O'Neill," a boyish voice chimed in; "and shame the cynics".

We all glared at the First-year's man — who was making himself very much at home for a lad of his tender years — but as he had nothing more to say, we let him off with a look, and turned to the lethargic story-teller.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GRAMMATICAL CARESS.

"You saved life with that Boyton-Grammar of yours, if I catch the drift of your last remark?" interposed the Professor magniloquently, as if he were addressing a public meeting. "May I hazard the guess that Boyton on that occasion was rather a weapon of offence than of defence?"

"Well, you're right," said O'Neill. "Offence is more in Boyton's line. And he certainly did press heavily, that day, on a butcher's boy. You remember those slagersjongens that saunter about, in white linen coats, with great protruding baskets on their shoulders. They jostle and push wherever they have a chance, and whirl round with their cargoes of meat, so as to make you start. You know the tribe. Well, Boyton proved an admira-

ble corrective to the insolence of one of these imps.

It was a day there was a sort of festival in the Hague. From early in the afternoon there was a crush everywhere. The singels and the main roads through the Wood were filled with holiday-makers. Soldiers were parading here and there. Everyone was in the best of good humour; music in the distance rose and fell on the air; flags fluttered from the windows. Look where you might, there were bright dresses, prancing horses, snorting motors, and pedestrians of all descriptions.

I was one of the pedestrians. I had been at my grammar in the morning; and after a long spell in the house had stepped over to Enderby's, and coaxed that lazy fellow out for a stroll. It was perfect weather, and the crowds were wonderfully well-behaved. We enjoyed ourselves finely 'under the green-wood tree,' till we were brought to a stand-still in a dense mass of humanity that was packed along the edge of a canal, scarcely moving. A procession or something had impeded the traffic some moments.

There was a knot of butchers' boys right in front of us. They were roughly shoving their neighbours

about, and seeing what mischief they could do. Horse play, in fact. They didn't seem to fit into Boyton's categories, either of 'Natives intelligent' or 'polite'. Presently one brawny scoundrel began to throw stones at the occupants of a carriage that was slowly passing by.

I couldn't believe my eyes! There sat an old lady of eighty or ninety, with soft white hair — the very picture of fragility; opposite her was a nurse in dark uniform, in charge of three dainty little children in pink and white — mere babies of three or four — with innocent blue eyes gazing all round them. And, actually, that ruffianly knecht was about to bombard the group with whatever he had in his hand!

Bang went a big mass of something — presumably hard, from the rattle it made — against the side of the carriage.

Happily he was a poor marksman, that rascally slager; for at that short range he ought to have been able to demolish so fragile an old lady at the first shot, or at the very least have put out one eye. As it was, he only knocked off her bonnet.

Enraged, apparently, at his poor practice at a

practically stationary target so close at hand, he picked up another half-brick and wheeled, to take more deliberate aim.

The delicate old lady grew pale, and spasmodically fumbled with her parasol to shield the children.

I thought her eye caught mine ; and, seeing there was no escape for her unless I interposed — no one till now seemed to have noticed the occurrence — I shouted, "Stop, slager, stop!" and whisked Boyton's learned pages right into his face, taking care at the same moment to administer a vigorous push to the long arm of the lever conveniently made by his basket. This forced him revolve suddenly on his own axis — beefsteak and all; and, as he spun round, I accelerated his motion with a pat or two from the 'compendium'. It was all the work of an instant, and executed just in time. The grammatical caress foiled his aim completely, and he flung his missile blindly in the wrong direction.

As I slipped unostentatiously into the crowd out of the immediate neighbourhood of the discomfited marksman, I had the satisfaction of seeing the dear old lady recover colour and smile. The babies crowed with delight, and clapped their

hands. They thought it was a game got up for their special benefit!

I raised my hat and retired, a warm glow of self-approval in my breast, and on my lips an involuntary quotation from Boyton: "De spraak-kunst is voor iedereen onmisbaar."

Meantime the brickbat fell harmlessly on the back of a policeman who, with hands tightly clasped behind him, was studying a bed of scarlet geraniums. He never even turned, but only said "Ja, ja," over his shoulder.

Two days after this adventure my eye caught the following paragraph among the advertisements in the Nieuwe Courant:

"Stop, Slager, stop!"

The Baroness X. and her three grandchildren herewith beg heartily to thank the young Englishman for his gallant conduct in the Wood, on the 31st Ultimo.

CHAPTER VII.

A GOSSIPY LETTER.

"Don't talk any more about that grammar-book," I interposed. "It's all very well in its way, but it doesn't account for half Jack's adventures. Now I can let you into a secret. Please don't look so apprehensive, O'Neill! As it happens, I had a descriptive letter from Enderby just about the time that Jack was making the most brilliant progress with his Dutch vocabulary. It gave me a vivid picture of what was going on in the Hague when this linguist of ours got really started to work.

Here are two of these long epistles. In the first he tells me all about the MacNamaras — Jack's cousins, you know — who came across from Kilkenny, for a trip to Holland. They were at the

Oude Doelen when he wrote, and our friend Jack was posing as a great Dutch scholar and showing them the sights.

My dear Cuey-na-Gael,

You would be amazed to see the confidence with which O'Neill acts as guide to the MacNamaras.

MacNamara père is mostly buried in museums, or is on the hunt for archaeological papers, so Kathleen and Terence are left on Jack's hands.

He has been everywhere with them, and has evidently impressed them with his astounding Dutch. To them it seems both correct and fluent. They have only had three days of it as yet, and haven't had time to find him out. Kathleen is as haughty as ever; and I can see she chafes at being obliged to submit to the direction of a mere boy, as she regards Jack. She was furious the day before yesterday, when in passing through one of the back streets he asked her if she had ever noticed what the Dutch Government printed in front of the surgeries.

She glanced up and, to her horror, read: "Hier mangelt men." It was only a momentary shock;

she guessed soon enough what it meant; but it gave her a turn all the same. Perhaps it wasn't a very finished kind of joke, but she needn't have been quite so fierce about it. "You're cruel," she said, "cruel and heartless! Why even your dogmatic and intolerable chum, Mr. van Leeuwen, wouldn't have been so harsh as that."

Now it was that little speech of hers that suggested something to me. Was there ever anything between her and van Leeuwen? They were at the University about the same time; and it seems van Leeuwen was a great friend of the father, who had him down to his place in the country and showed him his manuscripts. But I believe Kathleen couldn't stand him. They used always to be arguing about the Suffragettes, and passed for official enemies, in a way, — at least as uncompromising leaders on opposite sides. She used to say that van Leeuwen was a standing proof that mere learning couldn't enlarge the mind. Once in a private debate she referred to him as a "learned barbarian and a retrograde medievalist."

She was called to order for it, of course; but her apology didn't amount to much. She said she wouldn't mind dropping the adjectives, but she

would stick to the nouns. I believe van Leeuwen was quite content, however, and congratulated his witty antagonist on the fact that she would mellow with time. We always thought in those days they were sworn foes, and always would be. But I have a dim idea there is now more friendly interest on both sides. And by the way van Leeuwen has been carrying on brisk correspondence with O'Neill, especially since he heard the MacNamaras were expected. He has offered his services, and those of his motor, to all and sundry, especially if they hail from Dublin: so I don't think he can be keeping up very much of a grudge.

But I was going to tell you about Jack. Lately I had noticed that his Dutch vocabulary was growing very rich. He seemed to have quite a hunger for nouns, and he used to ask the names of everything. But I had no idea of what he was up to. To day I found it out, and it's very curious.

I went round to the Doelen about twelve, to see how the MacNamaras were getting along, and to try and arrange their trip up the Rhine. MacNamara mère had written me a friendly little note from Kilkenny, telling me that the Doctor — as she always calls her husband — had got a trifle

absent-minded since his deafness became troublesome, and would I look him up occasionally during his stay in the Hague, and give him some advice about the Rhine. Well, I suppose van Leeuwen had forestalled me; but when I reached Vieux Doelen, the birds were flown. Gone at six o'clock, I was told — the three of them — to Cologne. Quick work, I thought; so I made a bee-line for O'Neill's. He surely would know about this sudden departure.

The landlady met me at the door with tears in her eyes. "O Mijnheer, Mijnheer!" she exclaimed half-sobbing. "Ik vrees voor mijnheer O'Neill. Hij studeert te veel, of ik weet het niet — maar het is niet goed met hem. Ik geloof", and here her voice sank to a horrified whisper, "dat hij een beetje kindsch geworden is; want hij heeft speelgoed gekocht, en hij maak overal zoo een rommel."

"Ja, juffrouw," I strove to explain, "Mijnheer studeert natuurlijk."

But she persisted, "Oh mijnheer! studeeren is het niet. Hij ziet het scherm voor een kachel aan, en verknoeit alles. Ik ben zoo bang, zoo benauwd! Ik durf het huis niet uit, van Maandag af al!"

Rather flustered by all this, I promised to call

the doctor if it were necessary, then climbed up the stairs to O'Neill's door. All was still. I knocked and entered. What a sight met my eyes! Indeed it was enough to astonish more experienced people than the landlady.

Neatly fastened on one side of the table was a model train, engine and all. Beside it was a toy house, with yard, garden, and stiff wooden trees. Then there was a bit of a doll's room with a kitchen stove. And verily to every one of these articles there was a label affixed. There sat the student, pen in hand, with a dictionary and a gum-bottle at his elbow. Snippets of paper littered his writing-desk and the floor around. His unfinished lunch (labelled too) looked down reproachfully from a pile of books built on the table.

Over the gorgeous screen that hid the hearth a conspicuous card was hung, bearing the mystic inscription, "What ought to be here — Kachel."

No wonder the careful hospita was upset. It would have been hard to say whether the apartment was more like a museum or an auction room.

He glanced up with a sort of blush when I came near; but raised his hand to enjoin silence, as he found the word he was in search of, and wrote it down.

Half expecting to see prices marked, I examined some of the labels. Nearly every thing had its Dutch name gummed on to it, such as 'spiegel lijst,' 'behangsel,' 'schotel of bakje,' and even on his sleeve 'mouw van mijn jas.'

"It's all right!" he burst forth enthusiastically. "Doing Berlitz Dutch, you see! Self-taught, too! Splendid plan. Three hundred words a day. I'll have two thousand new nouns at my fingers' ends before the Macs are back from the Drachenfels. Precious few things in the ordinary way of life, I won't know then! Eh, what?"

Then it dawned upon me he was getting up vocabulary.

"Nouns, of course," he said. "All nouns. That's the secret. True basis of any language.

"It's a discovery of my own. If you know the names of two or three thousand material things, you can never be at a loss. But I stick in a proverb, too, here and there, wherever it comes handy. See?"

He held up the sleeve of his dressing-gown on which the candid announcement was made in bold round-hand: "Ik heb het achter de mouw", and pointed to his bread-knife, which was tastefully adorned with the words: "Het mes op de keel zetten."

Yes, I saw.

Well; then he explained, and argued, and tried to proselytize me. He was making hay while the sun shone — which meant that he was preparing, in the absence of Terence and Kathleen, for his famous cycling-tour; getting on his armour, in fact.

In such spirits I had never seen him.

And, I must say, he made out a good case for his method. It seems he had anticipated most of the queries he might be obliged to put during his travels. He had docketed every part of a railway carriage, and even mastered all sorts of regulations, from those of the Luxe-trein to Buurtverkeer, and from the yearly ticket to the humble perronkaartje. It looked very thorough, and I understood that he had treated his cycle the same way. But I have grave doubts! I am the more confirmed in my scepticism from what the landlady told me at the door. After reassuring her on the score of O'Neill's health, I emphasised the fact that he was going on a trip, and must practise Dutch by way of preparation.

That was worse than all, she thought; as Mijnheer O'Neill would certainly come to harm. "Hij is zoo veranderd. Het is zoo eng." Yesterday he had asked

her about the print of a sea-fight that her little boy had put up in the hall. She said it was de Ruyter ; and began to expatiate on that hero's achievements.

But he cut her short with : "Een beroemde man was hij zeker ; misschien de grootste *water-baas* van zijn tijd."

I explained that he probably meant zee-held ; but not remembering the right term in time, had taken one like it.

But the landlady could not be pacified.

"Het doet mij huiveren te denken dat hij op reis gaat!" she said.

I was not without my apprehensions either. For he means to start out next week with two thousand new words.

He'll probably find that such hastily acquired information is not without its drawbacks.

But more again. Hope your studies are prospering. Best success with your book.

Vale, vale.

As ever yours,

Phil Enderby.

P. S. The Macs are gone to Bonn, where your uncle expects to find wonderful manuscripts. Not much fun for the others, though !

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SURPRISES OF THE MAAS.

“Well, well!” ejaculated O’Neill irritably. “What an inveterate old gossip Enderby is, to be sure! He exaggerates shamelessly.

I remember that day quite well.

The landlady was a bit peevish and hysterical, I thought. She never quite took to the Berlitz-method as I had improved it; and she became grandmotherly to me from the moment I made that slip about the *zee-held*. The whole thing was getting on her nerves, so I gave her a rest. Took a day off, in fact; and went for a tour round the Rotterdam havens. I had some idea of recapitulating the old ground — the first thousand words, you know — whilst I should be steaming around the harbour. But as soon as we pushed off from

the wharf and went skimming over the sun-lit Maas, the brilliant and animated scene wiped the new vocabulary clean out of my mind for the time-being; and I didn't feel at all inclined to dig it out of my notes. The marvellous colouring of everything held me spell-bound. It was like fairyland. Our boat was crowded, and a man on board pointed out the sights. That was the only Dutch study I got that day; for some one began to speak to me in English — an Amsterdammer, as it appeared, who told me that the grachten in Amsterdam surpassed every other spectacle the world had to show; and made me promise to go and see them as soon as I could. I asked him what he thought of the harbour we were in; but he wasn't so enthusiastic. Meantime it had grown darker, and a steady, cold, sea-fog drifted round us. It got dismally wet, as well as gloomy; and the deck dripped with clammy moisture. We were hardly moving, presently; and our captain kept the steam whistle hard at work. The sight-seers were grievously disappointed; and one fellow-victim informed me it would be a good thing if we got near land anywhere, in time to catch the last train.

Horns kept booming around us, every few seconds;

perky little tugs and immense black hulls swept by us at arm's length, piping or bellowing, according to their temperament and ability. The Amsterdammer and I had gone to the prow, to try and peer a little further into the dense curling vapour, when a siren — I think that's what you call the thing — gave such a sudden blood-curdling yell at our very elbow, it seemed as if we had trodden on the tail of the true and original Sea-serpent, and that the reptile was shrieking in agony. From that time on, we had sea-serpents every other minute — whole swarms of them — infuriated, inquisitive or resigned — young and old — soprano, alto, tenor; — all whining, hooting and snorting; every one trying to howl all the others down. Excuse my referring to it, but it was the best illustration I had yet got of Boyton's verbs.

"Ik graauw, ik kef en ik kweel!" said one set of voices. "Ik krijsch, ik fluit en ik gil!" answered their rivals. But the deep boom of new-comers swept the earlier songsters out of the field: "Ik rammel, ik ratel en ik scheur". It was a regular chorus. "Ik gier en ik piep" squeaked the little tugs, "ik fop en ik jok". But the first musicians, the sentimental ones, wouldn't be outdone. They

were evidently turning over their grammars very rapidly, to get a really melancholy selection, for in another moment their lugubrious snuffle pierced the fog like a knife:

“Ik wee-ee-een; ik krijgt; en ik hui-ui-ui-l-l!”

There was one long-drawn-out sob, that rose and fell and rose again with such appalling and expressive anguish, that I could have imagined half the Netherlands had turned into a gigantic sea-serpent, and had bitten off its own tongue. So human, too, was its tortured wail, that I instinctively thought of Polyphemus having his eye gouged out by Ulysses. The hero, you remember, did it with a burning pine. One has a horrible sympathy for Polyphemus, even though he is a monster and mythical. Happily our Polyphemus only gave two or three of his prize yells. Then he seemed to settle into sleep, away down the river somewhere.

The Amsterdam-man explained to me that in his city the fog-horns were much more musical. This thesis was warmly contested by a Rotterdammer who had overheard it, and who spoke of the Capital with a distinct want of reverence. The argument soon deviated into Dutch, and I lost

hold of it; but through a cloud of statistics and history I observed that local patriotism on both sides stood at fever heat.

By and by, the fog thinned a little; and we crept along to a landing-stage, where the Amsterdammer and I climbed on shore with alacrity. We lost our way at first, and wandered about within ear-shot of the siren-brood, whooping and calling and taunting one another on the river; but my new-made friend stumbled at last on some spot he was acquainted with; and hastily giving me some directions, went off to his train.

After the long Polyphemus-concert on the murky river I wasn't in much humour for Dutch, but I had to speak it at every corner to ask my way. In an open thoroughfare — there were some people about, but not many — near an archway, I came upon Clotho. Perhaps the Greek Mythology was running in my head: but there she sat. Old beyond words, but hale; wrapped up marvellously, with head and jaws swathed in dim flannel, she gazed, without moving, on a table in front of her, spread with dried eels and other occult delicacies. As I approached, to enquire for the 'kortste weg naar de elektrische tram', she didn't move a muscle,

Something about her made me pause upon my step, and refrain from speech. No movement. But wait! One thickly muffled hand went out to some obscure eatable, slowly grasped it, dipped it in a sort of cup, then, still more slowly, brought it to her lips. Yes. She was alive; for she munched, calmly and dispassionately. The sight impressed me. It was like Fate; or an ancient priestess performing mysterious rites. Clotho would look like this, if Clotho would munch instead of spin.

Meantime the inevitable butcher's boy had joined me. Two of them, indeed, stood at my side, curious to know what interested the vreemdeling. The old lady never winced under the scrutiny, but put forth her hand again for another shell. There was a book-stall near, but nobody at it, as far as I could see. The whole street sounded hollow; and everything dripped. It made me shiver to look at the stone-pillars, oozy and moist, with condensed sea-fog trickling down. The glaring street-lamps hardly lit up the scene; but they showed the damp. Polyphemus gave a distant whoop, as if it were his last: and the Spectre munched. She hadn't once looked up. It all felt like a dream — except for the butchers' boys.

"Wat doet ze — die oude mejuffrouw?" I enquired.

"Ze zit te eten," was the prompt reply.

"Waarom zit ze te eten daar?" I asked.

"Om dat ze trek heeft!" A snigger went round the company. Evidently that reply was of the nature of wit; and they expected something sparkling from me in return. But I couldn't sparkle. "Trek" was unknown to me. Strange, how you can be bowled over by a simple word, if you've never heard it! Trekken — trok — getrokken, was familiar. That meant to pull, draw, or wander. "Trekschuit" — "trekpot" — "trekvogel": I had them all labelled on my desk in the Hague. But "trek" itself, what was that exactly? Provided of course, the youth were grammatical, — which I very much doubted.

"Zij heeft getrokken," however, when I tried it, only raised new difficulties. What then did she pull, and why? 'Trekvogel' was an alluring idea to follow up, in a town where Jan Olieslagers' fame was universal: but common sense forbad my pursuing that line far.

The defects of my home-made Berlitz became painfully evident. It's humiliating, when you have your 2000 new nouns at your fingers' ends, and

hundreds of old ones; and yet can't understand the first thing a knecht says. But the bystanders were growing impatient; so — to withdraw gracefully — I enquired, "wat is *trek*?"

It was probably the best retort I could have made. "Ja, wat is het?" he soliloquised, evidently puzzled. "Ik weet het niet. Maar ik heb altijd trek."

"Ik ook", said a smaller boy; "in een boterham."

Tongues were loosened on all sides. "Nee; in een lekker stuk worst," I heard one say.

"Nee; niet waar"; interrupted a brawny fellow with a brick-red face; "Zuurkool en spek."

I nipped the unprofitable discussion in the bud by demanding, as I moved away: "Maar wat is trek?"

"Dat weet je wel," said the first fellow, the wit. "Als je te veel eet."

"Nee, heelemaal niet," jeered a late-comer. "Kan je begrijpen! Maar als je niets eet, dan heb je trek!"

The crowd cheered at this. He had evidently the majority with him. High words followed; and the controversy became general, as the protagonists in this psychological debate found backers, and swarmed away towards the centre of town.

I was left alone, and Clotho looked up.

She dipped a periwinkle in one of the weird cups, and held it towards me. "Heeft Mijnheer trek?" Would I join in the repast! "Ik? Duizendmaal verschooning!" I said, as I quickened my pace. My confusion increased as I reflected that I had probably been urging my late interlocutors to "define appetite" — a thing even Aristotle could hardly do. Naturally the populace broke into parties — Aristotelians and Platonists (let us say), or into Hoekschen en Kabeljauwschen.

In any case my confidence was shaken in my improved, home-made Berlitz. It might be splendid for travelling; but in ordinary life it didn't seem to cover the ground.

On arriving at my lodgings I was met at the door by the landlady's son. He was beaming. Lately he had been working up his English, and truly had made giant strides. "Koot eeffening, Sir," he said, "Koot eeffening! Ai hef an little chat." "I wish to have a chat", he seemed to mean.

It was an odd request for a trifling practice in English; but I like to encourage merit, so I assured him of my willingness to have a friendly talk.

"Oh, yes. All right," I said. "But won't you come

up stairs ? We have a few minutes before supper."

"But — Ai hef here an naiz little chat!"

"Ah, just so. Did you perhaps have a talk with some one in English when I was away?"

"No, sir; but ai *hef* een chat." This was bewildering; and as he seemed puzzled, too, and always stuck to the same noun I investigated more fully. "You talk of a *chat*! — dat is een praatje, weet je wel?"

"Nee, mijnheer, heus: het is waar. Geen praatje."

We were half-way up the stairs now. "Come on", I said.

"Vayt", he replied, diving into some recess. "Ai vil let see you."

In an instant he was back with something under his coat. This he produced with the delighted exclamation: "ze little chat!"

It was a bedraggled kitten that he had discovered wandering about in the fog and mewing piteously. "Vil you hef him? Anders, zegt moe, hij kan niet blijven."

"I'll talk to your mother about the kitten," I answered. Kitten, — that's what we call it — not chat. Maar hoor eens, jongen, heeft het poesje trek?"

"O mijnheer, verbazend!" was the ecstatic reply;

and in another three minutes he had a saucer of milk under the foundling's nose, and was watching kitty's lapping operations with a joy as keen as that of kitty herself.

I had got what I wanted without any philosophic argument. There was the proof.

Trek is appetite.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DEVOTED NURSE.

“Well” continued Jack; “it was that simple experience about Clotho’s *‘trek’* that threw doubts on the value of my Berlitz soliloquy-method. You need at least two people, if you are to make solid progress; and you must ask each other questions about ‘hunger’ and ‘responsibility’ and ‘excellence’, and things you can’t label. That’s the reason I got Terence’s help when he came back from the Rhine. Kathleen was unapproachable; she said she disliked Dutch, and moped a good deal, I thought, though she was deep in the study of art. That was before the accident, you see. After that, she was quite angelic and nursed her father assiduously, and the landlady’s little son, too. You know uncle got a severe shock from a motor-bike along the canal.

Jan who had been prowling around, to give his 'chat' an airing, ran across just in time to push the absent-minded old gentleman out of the way. But the lad was thrown on the ground and badly hurt. We were very anxious for a day or two. Uncle pulled round soon enough — his indignation at the motor cyclist helped him, as he had some vague idea, if he were up and about, he could get the culprit arrested. But Jan grew steadily worse for the first week. Kathleen kept going back and forward, looking after them both. She said she never could repay Jan enough for saving her father's life. It appears to have been a 'close shave', at the edge of that deep canal; and Uncle nearly had them all in. He had spent the morning with me, telling me about his grand 'find' of original Celtic manuscripts at Bonn; and about van Leeuwen's kindness. I never saw him so taken with anybody! You know my uncle's pertinacity. He had got wind of these precious Celtic relics; and, as everything was closed at the University at that time of the year, he worried and fumed, till he met some of the authorities that knew van Leeuwen. Immediately he banged off a telegram to Arnhem, requesting van Leeuwen's private

influence; and, to his delight, that young man came joyfully in person; and saw the thing through. Very kind of him, of course! Especially as Uncle kept him busy, the whole time, with professors and manuscripts. Once only, did the archaeological dust clear a little; and our Arnheim investigator was allowed to behold the other members of the party. That's the day Kathleen had to draw the Dragon's Cave at the Drachenfels for her father, who had theories about the original legend, and wouldn't be satisfied with picture postcards. Van Leeuwen was interested enough in the suffragette to 'snap shot' her as she sketched. Alas, she heard the click of the camera, and hardly spoke to him the rest of the day! At least, that's Terence's story. And I know there must have been something to rake up the former "women's rights" difference. For next day van Leeuwen was in The Hague and very dull; and when, the day after, the Macs came back, Kathleen was absurdly quiet — a new thing for her. She had caught a cold, she said, sketching caves — with people staring at her and taking snap shots!

But I was telling you about my uncle's escape. He was standing noting down something that had

occurred to him — for his brochure on the Celtic Revival, very likely — when the motor-cycle turned the corner at a fearful speed.

He was bewildered a little, and was stepping back right into the canal, when Jan bounded across the road and pulled and pushed him right.

The bike-tourist must have been a heartless fellow; for he never swerved, but bore down at full tilt on both rescuer and rescued, while they were still on the edge of the water.

The youthful Jan, however, is an original customer and daring; for he turned the motor-man aside as cleverly as if he had Boyton in his hand. He either flung himself (or his cap) against the advancing horror. Terence says it was the kitten he threw; my uncle asserts that he turned the destroyer aside by using 'moral suasion'. I don't think myself there was much time for moral suasion. Jan was so frightened by the occurrence, and so concerned for the safety of his pet, when all was over, that it is highly probable he did, as a last, desperate resource, try to protect both his dear kitty and the 'Engelschen Mijnheer', at some considerable risk. The "chat" was unharmed, but fled up an adjacent elm, whence it had to be coaxed down

at dusk with endless saucerfuls of milk. This task Kathleen took on herself, after we discovered that Dr. MacNamara, though shaken, was not injured. Nothing would have pleased you better than to have seen her beaming face as she brought the trembling little kitten to Jan's bedside. She didn't know a word of Dutch; but managed to communicate quite easily, by signs, with Jan's mother, whom she promised to come often and see. She little thought how often. We all assumed at first that the little fellow had escaped scot-free; but in a day or two he was in a high fever, and unconscious. He had got a contusion, the doctor said, and would be confined to his cot for weeks.

It was marvellous to see how Kathleen comforted the poor mother, without either grammar, Polite Dialogue, or the use of *Het*.

I grew quite jealous and envious. Here was I who had been slaving at syntax and accidence for weeks, and I couldn't carry on an intelligent conversation for two minutes without deviating into metaphysics, or getting into a quarrel; while my cousin (who said she hated Dutch) could get through the niceties of sick-room nursing and the subtleties of heartening up the poor hysterical mother, with the utmost ease.

And I knew for certain that she couldn't go through the Present Optative of 'ik graauw, ik kef en ik kweel', or give one of the rules for *gij* (*lieden*) — no, not to save her life. But she was never at a loss, for all that. A more devoted nurse, indeed, I cannot imagine.

At the crisis, when the little sufferer was really in danger, she used to watch by him hours at a stretch, to relieve the helpless mother. The serious turn came all at once; and no aid was at hand. Jan was in pain, and wandered in his talk, crying out that the motor-fiets was hunting him into the canal, for having rescued a *vreemdeling*; and pouring forth such a torrent of elementary English and Boyton-Dutch as surprised us all. I fancy it was, in part, my early translations he had treasured up; for some of my mistakes about handcuffs and dogcollars figured amid the incoherences; and it was pitiable to hear him plead for a *ziebeneden* to wrap round his injured arm — already bandaged as tightly as he could bear it.

Then he kept ringing the changes on an expression I must have used in argument with his mother the day I persuaded her to keep his bedraggled foundling.

“Het is geen menigte poesjes, zegt Mijnheer; het is maar een stuk of een! Heus, moe, laat hem blijven. Niet bang, hoor, schattie, je bent maar een stuk of een! Pas op, Mijnheer, daar komt de fiets!” And so on da capo.

So wild and restless was he, the second evening of the fever, that we had to summon the doctor unexpectedly, quite late. Yes; his condition was disquieting, and we must get him to sleep. It was largely a matter of nursing, at the moment; new medicine was sent for; his head was to be kept cool; and only one watcher was to remain in the room. Above all, no noise. “If the English juffrouw, who seemed to understand the lad’s state, would consent to sit up to two or three o’clock, so much the better. The excited mother could have a rest meantime. Otherwise she would be fit for nothing next day”.

But no sooner had the good doctor softly closed the front door, than my landlady declared it was her intention to watch all night.

Kathleen was at her wits’ end. In vain did she make signs and talk emphatic English in her high voice, or try coaxing with a bit of the brogue. All her feminine free-masonry failed to communi-

who had been waiting to take his daughter back to the Doelen, tried moral suasion in his own particular brand of German, and even in other tongues — Terence says his father recited a well-known passage from the Iliad in his eagerness to be persuasive! — but all without avail. She wouldn't heed anybody; and she wouldn't go; she sat close to the cot, rocking violently to and fro, and moaning "Mijn eigen kind! mijn eigen kind!"

The little fevered face was puckered with a new perplexity at the sound of all this grief and the familiar voice. "Moeder," he cried, "moederr! Daar komt ie weer! Hij wou me in 't water gooien. Moeder, vasthoue, hoor!"

It was most painful; for my landlady's impending hysterics were making the lad worse every moment.

"Is poesje ook weggelopen?" he said presently. A happy thought struck Kathleen. She stole downstairs, and presently returned with the 'chat', which was purring vigorously and giving 'kopjes'. As she placed the soft furry creature in Jan's hands, he stopped moaning and stroked it joyfully. "Dag Kitty!" he said with delight. "Ben je terug?" came the faintest idea to the mother. Uncle Mac,

Apparently he thought it was I who had restored the wanderer, for he explained: "Geen praatje, mijnheer: Zat is mine naiz little chat."

Then, exhausted and satisfied, he dropped into a sound sleep.

CHAPTER X.

GOSSIP AND DIPLOMACY.

The strain was over; and the little lad slumbered peacefully, — until dawn, as it proved. We got the mother gradually quieted, and at last induced to go off to bed, leaving Kathleen in charge for the night. About half-past-one, Terence and I, growing hungry, extemporized a sort of pic-nic in the kitchen; but Kathleen wouldn't touch anything we brought her. It was then I began to notice how grave she was, and silent.

But I must say, nobody could be more devoted than she was to the youthful invalid.

He awoke rather early after his timely sleep, but much calmer. And — a good sign — he had a healthy 'trek', which we were gratified to see in operation upon 'beschuit' and 'melk', before his

mother arrived to resume the reins of authority.

As we escorted Kathleen to her hotel in the cool of the morning, we found her singularly irresponsive, not to say depressed; and I somehow got wind of the fact that van Leeuwen, who had motored up to the Hague, on hearing of her father's accident, had been prowling about the Vieux Doelen ever since. He had visited Dr. MacNamara almost every day; but Kathleen had kept studiously aloof. "I know he likes father," she said, "and I'm glad he comes to see him: but I'm not interested."

The evening before, when she was on her way to my landlady's, to watch by the sick boy, van Leeuwen had met her right in front of the Mauritshuis. But she had treated him with such stately indifference, and greeted his remarks with such frigid courtesy, that the good-natured fellow was really hurt. He had in fact returned the same evening to Arnhem. Kathleen said she was very glad, except for her father's sake; but she didn't give one the impression of being enthusiastic about it.

On reaching the Doelen, Terence found a hasty scrawl from van Leeuwen inviting him to a cycling tour in his neighbourhood. Any friends he might bring would be welcome. O'Neill was coming, in any case.

"Well then I'll go next Friday," Terence broke out; "at least, if you're ready then, Jack. We'll have a grand time. Dad is all right now; and that funny little kid is on the mend. So we can go with a clear conscience. Say, yes."

"Ah, that's like you boys", said Kathleen banteringly, but without the ghost of a smile, "to go cycling about, enjoying yourselves, no matter what happens to the wounded! I'm still anxious about that child. And I do wish I understood him better when he talks."

"As for that", I interrupted, "I'll give you the key to it in an instant. Jan's reminiscences are all about my Dutch; and I'll lend you my diary, and the most entertaining Grammar in Holland. Besides, I've written a monograph on obvious blunders, English into Dutch. Read these, now, when you're tending this convalescent boy-hero of yours. He'll understand them, I'll be bound; and it'll shake him up, and do you a world of good yourself."

"What a silly cousin, to be sure!" she replied. "You forget, sir, I need some one to explain all your double-Dutch. Get me a 'coach' now, a competent one, who knows everything, and I'll give your booklet a trial."

"Done!" I said, as we parted.

And I held her to it. My diary kept her amused for a couple of days, as she watched in the sick-room. It roused her out of her depression, and she got into the way of reading things to Jan as he recovered.

She couldn't remain quite smileless; but grew interested enough in Dutch to demand my monograph and — above all — the Grammar!

"You shall have them both," I assured her, — "the booklet on the spot; and the Grammar, when I cycle to Arnhem and Enderby becomes our guide, to do all the talking.

"Couldn't I have it sooner? I'm dying with curiosity to see that awful book. Or, when you are there, and any of your friends are coming to the Hague, just send it with them."

"Yes. There's a 'coach' coming up in a day or two. I'll send it along."

I fancied her eyes gave a bit of a flicker. But she was meek and friendly: so I knew it was all right. She hadn't asked what kind of coach. But she's intelligent.

That very instant I went home and wrote van Leeuwen, that we — Terence and I — were starting

next day, by train, for Arnhem, whence we should have a run through Gelderland. There was no note-paper in the house, but I couldn't wait. So I penned what I had to say on a series of visiting cards, numbering them 1, 2, 3, up to 10, and enclosing them in a portly yellow envelope. It was the only thing I had. I was pleased to notice its impressive aspect, as that would prevent its getting lost readily.

For I attached much importance to that communication. In it I prepared van Leeuwen's mind, indirectly and circuitously, for apprehending the idea that Miss MacNamara was now deeply interested in Dutch; and was studying it to help her in nursing that sick boy. Also that, as she had grown much too sombre of late with the responsibilities she had assumed, we were trying to to brighten her up. When the lad was quite well, we should all do the Friesland meres, before we returned to Kilkenny. But not for a week yet.

And so on. I hinted as distantly as I could, that he had motored back to Arnhem a trifle too soon. Even yet, if he would leave his camera at home — the one with the loud click — and if he wouldn't be too exclusively immersed in Celtic manuscripts

when he did meet with the MacNamara family, there was no reason to suppose that his offences were beyond pardon. All this in shadowy outline — for fear he would motor up like a Fury, and either break his neck on the way, or spoil everything by premature action. I made the haze quite thick here and there on the visiting cards — their form lent itself to obscurity — and I told him “I should see him without fail within twenty-four hours.

“I might have to ask a favour at his hands about a grammar.

“Terence was well: the Doctor was well, went to Leyden daily to the Library. We expected to reach Velperweg toward midday. Don’t be out.”

I posted the yellow missive with my own hands, and reckoned out by the ‘bus-lighting plate’, that it would be collected that night.

“Tour or no tour, to-morrow,” I said to myself, heaving a sigh of relief after my race to the pillar-box; “We’re on the brink of a romance, if the protagonists only knew it. A little bad Dutch now seems all that is required. And we can rely on Boyton”.

Queer, when you think of it, that you sometimes hold people's destinies in the hollow of your hand!

However, I didn't philosophize much, but got to sleep as soon as ever I could, — content as from a good day's work.

CHAPTER XI.

A STUDY IN CHARACTER.

Next morning we were up at dawn to be in time for the first express. We cycled to the station; but a row of market-boats, that had reached the one and only canal-bridge on our route, kept us waiting till they filed past; and we missed our train.

"Choost kon!" exclaimed a porter cheerfully, as he took our cycles. "Day-train choost away — von — two — meenit — ako!"

"Never mind", I rejoined. "There are plenty of day-trains left. It's early yet."

As he looked doubtful, I added in the vernacular: "Wij zijn in goeje tijd voor de bommel; nie-waar? Zes vier en veertig."

"Net, mijnheer", he replied, grinning appreciation of my Dutch, as he led the way to the loket.

There were no difficulties there. You merely had to say, "Twee retour kaartjes, Arnhem. Tweede klasse. Gewone biljetten," and there you were. And these 'gewone biljetten' made the forwarding of the cycles simplicity itself. Duly provided with the forthcoming fiets-papier tjes we ensconced ourselves in a non-smoker, and — to while away the time — rehearsed our Traveller's Dialogue. That is the system I had made out long since, but now partly forgotten. Terence had benefited by my tuition, and could now keep the ball rolling, with more or less relevant remarks, whilst I enumerated the parts of a train, and talked about tickets and towns.

So smoothly did our conversation run that we were tempted to repeat it, with variations; and we were just in the middle of as fine an elocutionary practice as ever you heard, when there was a scramble on the platform; and in there bounded into our compartment — just as the train began to move off — three tourists, hot and breathless! They were Englishmen, — London shopkeepers in a small way, I guessed, from their talk. Two of them, father and son, seemed a bit hectoring and dictatorial; the third was an admiring satellite. For very shame's sake Terence and I didn't like to

drop our Dialogue as if we were culprits; so we lowered our voices, and went through it to the end.

Our new companions listened for a moment, and the truculent father said, "Neouw, there y'are, Tom! wot's hall that tork abeout? You kneouw the lingo."

Master Tom — he was about nineteen — posed, apparently, as a linguist. He knew the language all right, he said. "It was kind of debased German. He had picked it up from a boy at school. It was the sime to 'im as Hinglish".

"Wottaw thiy siyin", Tom?" said the father.

"Oh," muttered Tom, "abeout the kaind 'v dai it is, an' hall thet rot. But no use listenin' to them. They tork such a bad patois, an' hungrimmetikil."

The satellite looked impressed. "D'you tork 't's wull 's French an' Juh'm'n?" he asked.

"Hall the sime to me", said Tom. "The sime 'z Hinglish."

The satellite's awe deepened. Presently however he spied the cattle in the fields as we sped along. He pointed them out to Tom. "Fine ceows, miy wu'd!"

"Humph! better in Bu'kshire!" replied the linguist.

In a minute or two he broke out again: "Lot 'v ceows in a field here, Tom!"

"Faugh!" said Tom; "faw mo' 'n Essex!"

But the man of humility had an eye for landscape, and couldn't be repressed.

"Ho, crikkie", he exclaimed, "look at that meadow an' canal. Ain't it stunnin'?" But the father came to his son's rescue in defence of Old England:

"You jist go deown Naw'fk wiy! Faw better th'n this wretched 'ole!"

The satellite evidently felt reproved for his lack of patriotism, for he subsided immediately. But he couldn't help himself. You might see by the way he looked out of the window that he was in ecstasies over the glowing panorama before him, in spite of Norfolk and Essex and the contempt of his fellow-travellers.

Meantime Terence, fuming and in disgust, had buried himself in the columns of Tit-Bits. The truculent one recognised the familiar weekly and drawing his son's attention to both reader and paper he announced quite audibly; "'E can read Hinglish. 'E looks hintelligent."

Advancing half-way across the carriage, he

cleared his throat, and addressed Terence at the top of his voice.

"Do you — a hem! — a hem! — do you — *speak Hinglish?*"

One could have heard the last two words in the next compartment.

Terence looked up; and I saw by the mischief in his eye what he was going to do.

"Hein?" he interrogated with a nasal whoop like a subdued trumpet. He had learnt this at school from his French teacher, and was a proficient at rendering it accurately. It gave an unconventional flavour to his manner — which was just what he wished.

"Hein?" he trumpeted again, with an air of amiable curiosity.

"I hawskt — do you — hem! — *speak — Hinglish?*"

"Ze Engels Langwitch? Yes: I shpeak him — von leetle bit. You alzóo?"

"Hi 'm 'n Englishman," said the truculent one proudly, a trifle taken aback.

"Zoo?" replied Terence. "Ach zoo. Ja. Jawohl. Zoo gaat 't. Beauti-ful — lang-witch! Beauti — ful!" he enunciated with painful distinctness and many twitches of his face.

All this fell in with the tourists' preconceived ideas of foreign utterance. They exchanged glances.

"You kin mike yors'ff hunderstood, hall raight," interposed the Linqvist. "Were you ever in London?"

"Oh, yes", answered my cousin slowly, counting off upon his fingers. "Alzoo — von, — two, — tree, — time — Mooch peoples — in Londe."

"Did you like London?" queried Truculence Senior.

"Londe? — No! No — boddy like Londe! — Fery ugly! Mooch smoke — alzoo fogk. — Men see nozzing. Mooch poor peoples — No boots."

"Not like London!! Why London's the gritest city in the wu'ld."

"I pity me mooch — for London peoples."

"Let'm aleoun, gov'ner," said the Linguist, furious. "It's the Heast End 'e's got in 'is 'ed."

"But the Heouses 'v Pawl' mint — and the Tride?" reasoned the father, reluctant to abandon the controversy.

"Houses Parliament? — nozzing!" said Terence recklessly. "Trade? — alzoo nozzing! American man hef all ze trade. Fevy clever. Alzoo German man. Fery clever."

That was a clincher. Terence had amply avenged their contempt of the scenery they were passing through.

"Let the bloomin' ass aleoun", cried Truculence Junior. "E deoun't kneouw wot 'e's torkin' abeout."

But the shot had gone home. The papers had been full of "Wake up, John Bull!" of late, and he felt uncomfortable. Yet though we relapsed into silence, it wasn't for long. For soon the senior member of the trio got very exasperated with a local railway-guide that he had been consulting. "Bit of a muddle that!" he cried contemptuously, flinging the booklet on the seat. "Cawn't mike 'ed or tile of it!"

He turned to my cousin: "Can you tell me'ow far it is to Gooday — or Goodee?"

Terence replied briskly in appalling English: "Goodee — I know-not. Zat iss nozzing. Good-day, zat is Goejen-dag!"

"Look 'ere," said the tourist; "Ere you aw!" pointing to the name of the place on his Cook's ticket.

"Oh," said Terence, getting so foreign as to be scarcely intelligible. "Zat-iss — Gouda. Beaut-ti-ful

city!" And he rolled his eyes in apparent awe at the magnificence of that unpretentious market-town. "Ex-qui-seet!"

"Ow far is it?" queried his interlocutor. "Ow long, in the trine — to Gouda?"

"Alzoo," returned my cousin, purposely misunderstanding him. "Yes; ferry long. Long times. Ferry old city. Much years. Tree — four — century! Historique!"

"Yes, yes" said the impatient traveller. "But — wen — d'we — arrive? get there — you kneouw —?"

"You vil arrivé," pronounced Terence in the same baby-English, "haff — of — ze — klok."

"Hawf 'n eour; that's wot 'e's drivin' et," grumbled the Linguist.

They kept on asking questions, and criticising us to our faces when they talked together. Our dress, our appearance, our complexions were all adjudged to be woefully foreign; and they got so patronising that I had to put in an odd word, in real English, to Terence, now and again, just to prevent them going too far. Imperceptibly conversation became general; and as I forced Terence out of his assumed ignorance of English, the surprise of the tourists deepened into dismay, when

they noticed we were talking more and more quickly, and idiomatically as well.

"Hi siy!" whispered the Satellite "they're learnin' Hinglish from hus! I'm blest hif thiy weount soon be nearly 's good 's we are!"

"Never you fear," said young Conceit. "Furriners never git the 'ang of it."

"Never," corroborated Truculence.

But the open criticising of our appearance was at an end.

Our companions looked anything but conciliatory when a crowd of rustics poured into the carriage at one of the stations. It was some sort of market at Gouda; and the bommel was crammed now. Finally the guard scurried along, and half hoisted, half pushed a peasant woman with her three children into the compartment.

It was odd to see Truculence rise and help the little ones in; and odder still to see the children smile up into that formidable face, when they took their seats.

I noticed the twinkle in his eye, however, as he watched the bairnies trying to scramble to the window. He was evidently much interested in a bright little boy of seven with dreamy eyes, who

was bent on amusing himself; and I could see that he wanted badly to shake hands with him and his tot of a sister, and ask them their names. He evidently regretted his inability to speak Dutch; but he made up for his silence by reaching the boy the window-strap, with a nod of comradeship. The little fellow took it eagerly and, after playing with it a moment or two, slid off his seat and actually climbed up beside Truculence (the scorner of everything non-British) and pushing Truculence to one side, looked out of Truculence's window.

So surprisingly passive was my severe compatriot at all this that I hazarded a guess, and said: "You have a boy of five at home?"

He stopped short clearing the pane for his tiny companion, and sat stock-still. It might have been a statue that was beside me, so little did he move. Not a sound in answer to my question!

Quickly I glanced at him.

Oh, I could have bitten off my tongue when I saw that man's face! It was drawn and white, and not at all like the scornful censor's of a few minutes before.

He continued staring out of the window a moment; then he turned and said quietly: "I 'ad — a

little fair-haired fellow — a year ago 'E was six An' the born image of thet kiddie there."

Here he stroked the kiddie's head, which was now glued to the glass in an eager endeavour to see a passing train.

"'E used to be that fond of machinery, too," he continued, opening a city-bag and bringing out a diminutive flying-machine, a "twee-dekker" that he had evidently bought in the Hague. "I got it, 'cos it minded me of the things my boy used to ply with. But I've nobody to give it to.

"May as well give it to this kid. Tell 'is mother 'e's to keep it. Tell 'er that I'm 'is hold uncle from Hingland."

I did my best. Klaas grasped the situation at once, as far as the twee-dekker was concerned. The mother was slower. Consternation and politeness took away her speech for an instant, but she soon recovered and put Claas through his drill.

"Oh Mijnheer, hij is zoo bij de hand!"

Then she overwhelmed us all with family reminiscences, which none of us understood a word of, but which could not be stopped. It was a relief to get to Gouda; and the tension of our feelings

was pleasantly relaxed by observing the profound disgust that mantled the Londoner's brow, when after helping the children on to the platform, he was accosted by a vendor of local dainties, who loudly insisted on selling Goudsche Sprits to the company. "Ere's a Johnny wants the kiddies, an'all of us, to liquor up — on neat spirits — before hight o'clock in the mo'nin'! Shime, I call it!"

Claas had to say 'Good-bye' to his new uncle, and we watched proceedings from our window. The Linguist ignored the adieu completely; but the Satellite manfully backed up the father, and shook hands all round. A knot of porters gathered to seize the luggage of the big Englishman, who stood, masterful and bored, in the midst of the hubbub. His jaw and chin were those of Rhadamanthus; but his eyes were soft as they rested on the boyish figure descending the stairs with his baby-sister. Claas was waving a small hand to his new uncle who had given him the Tweedekker; but his new uncle was not waving anything to him. So Claas stopped short, and cried at the top of his voice: "Wuif es oom! wui — uif es, nouw! Je moet wuife!"

"Wot's 'e up to, the young rescal?" he ask me.

"I believe he wants you to make a sign of Good-bye. It's always done here," I replied.

Well he produced, from some place or other, a brilliant jubilee handkerchief — he was a dressy man and had plenty of coloured things — and shook it with both hands to his tiny friend. And the last I saw of him, as the train steamed on towards Utrecht, was, his waving of this silk banner to the little boy on the steps; the stern lips were relaxed into a smile; the defiant face was quite wistful as he repeated: "The young rescal!"

"His bark his worse than his bite," whispered Terence at my elbow.

"Not a doubt of it," I replied. "And there are more of his kind."

CHAPTER XII.

BELET!

We got on famously at Utrecht and at the Arnhem station. In less time than it takes to tell it we were mounted on our cycles with our bags in front of us, and ready for the road.

"This is fine!" exclaimed Terence. And indeed it was. Charmed by the ease with which we had got along so safely, I felt a trifle elated over our linguistic victories, and had already begun to dream of fresh fields to conquer, when we drew near van Leeuwen's villa on the Velperweg — a lovely spot.

We dismounted to make sure we were right, and then walked briskly up the avenue.

The door was opened by a timed-looking servant, who said: "Er is belet".

It was the first time I had met the expression; yet it sounded oddly familiar. Ah, of course. For the last ten days I had been studying *biljetten* out of the railway-guide. There was apparently a slight provincialism in her way of the rendering the liquid in the middle of the word, but this didn't matter. There was a ticket, then. Puzzling, very.

"Ja?" I said tentatively.

"Er is belet," she repeated. The intonation was decisive; but as her manner was expectant, I took it for a question, had we tickets? Queer, certainly. Yes; I assured her we had, — "*gewone biljetten, retour, — geldig voor een maand.*"

She shifted her ground and said, "*Mijnheer heeft belet*".

Now you know how hard it is to be sure what person servants are talking about when they say *Mijnheer*. Did she mean me or her master? "*Welke Mijnheer?*" I asked.

Raising her voice she announced deliberately, but with increasing irritation: "*Mijnheer van Leeuwen — heeft — belet.*"

"Aha", I whispered to Terence, "It's my big letter she's talking about. Well, I'm glad it came in time".

"Uitstekend!" I hastened to say. "Dat biljet is

van mij. Dus mijnheer verwacht mij, niet waar?"

She nervously closed the door a bit. "Ik heb al gezaid — vanmorgen heeft mijnheer *expres belet gegeven*."

"Mag ik het hebben, dan", I enquired politely; "Mijn brief — dat geschreven biljet?"

"Hé?" she said, visibly relieved, opening the door widely as she spoke. "Neem mij niet kwalijk, Mijnheer. Ik wist niet dat u van de belasting was. Komt u om het beschrijvingsbiljet?"

She retreated a step, timidly, into the hall, and glanced at an elderly butler, who in silence had been standing at a discreet distance listening to our colloquy. The butler moved forward, and in an apologetic tone murmured, "Mijnheer, het beschrijvingsbiljet is nog niet klaar. Of komt u met een aanslagsbiljet?"

As I had a newspaper in my hand full of talk about a 'moordaanslag' I repudiated the latter idea indignantly. "Geen denken aan!" I said.

The butler came out and stood on the steps, enquiring "Is U soms een schatter."

Schatter? (Schat, a treasure; schatter, a *treasurer*, I reasoned.) "Wel nee: geen schatter ben ik, alleen Eerlijk Secretaris van de Studenten-Club".

In the hall a loopmeisje and a seamstress stood transfixed with curiosity. How could I get this mad interview terminated?

The deferential butler began to grow suspicious.

"Komt U niet van de belasting?"

"Ik weet het niet." I replied.

That was enough.

"Mijnheer geeft belet altijd 's morgens," he said, adding, "Wij zijn allemaal eerlijk hier!"

We appeared to be dismissed!

"Terence," I said quickly; "Look if b-e-l-e-t is in the dictionary. They always hark back to that."

In a minute he gave a mild shout: "It's here; it means hindrance. Ah, I see. Van Leeuwen is hindered seeing us. Hadn't we better go?"

"De belet is niet erg, hoop ik?" I said to the servant; "ik hoop dat Mijnheerspoedig gerestaureerd zal worden, als het een ziekte is."

Now at last we had mastered the mysteries of belet? No such thing!

Turning to go, I thought I might as well enquire when van Leeuwen could be seen. "Wanneer kan ik soms Mijnheer zien?" Her reply confounded me: "Vandaag of morgen, maar U moet belet vragen."

Vragen! surely not ask for an obstacle. "U

bedoeld weigeren, niet waar?" I suggested.

"Nee: belet vragen, anders zal mijnheer u niet ontvangen."

"Oh Terence!" I exclaimed. "This is too awful! He has this obstacle; he has given it to us; now we must ask it again. And I don't even know what it is!"

"Take care, Jack. Don't ask anything else, or you'll get us into a worse mess."

"One moment," I said, appealing to the stolid butler. "Moet ik verzoeken om weggestuurd te worden? Of wat?"

"Ja Mijnheer, ik verzoek jullie maar weg te gaan. Alstublieft!"

The solemn man looked like an archbishop. He cleared his throat and added courteously: "Maar, als U Mijnheer van Leeuwen wil spreken, moet U belet laten vragen. Anders krijgt U belet als U komt."

"Schei uit!" I cried in terror. "Duizendmaal verschooning!"

"Terence, let us fly! for my brain won't stand it."

We fled.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DAY-TRAIN.

We had a delightful spin along the Velperweg.

Dismounting three or four times to admire choice 'bits' of scenery, we were enticed on and on, and followed a side way that rose over a gentle slope. From the ridge of this acclivity we could watch the cloud shadows, violet and purple, sweeping over wide moors, and by their subtle contrasts bringing out the soft shimmering of the distant sunlight. On the horizon we made out the river and some hill-tops marked on our maps. Terence was confident he saw Nijmegen; but pushing on to get a still finer view, we came to grief in crossing a heather "brae". At least I did. The front wheel was wrenched to one side: and we had to foot it all the way to Velp. There having left both

machines at a cycle-mender's, we started for a long tramp.

That was a grand mistake, for we went too far. There were other ranges of wooded hills to be climbed, and the air was exhilarating. The time passed quickly, so it was late in the afternoon before we knew. Feeling more or less famished, we ventured on a short cut through the "Onzalige Bosch"; but soon were hopelessly lost. It was a task to get on the main road, still we discovered a kind of hamlet at last. It was very primitive, and there were no hotels or cafés to be seen. No shops, either, apparently, except a small affair for "garen" and "band". We entered. No; they had neither bread, nor coffee, nor milk. Rozendaal and Velp, and other far-off places were suggested as containing good hotels. We retired disappointed and hungrier than ever. Surely, I reflected, the people must eat bread here; there must be a baker's shop. Ask. Stepping back into the little den we had just left, I enquired of the vendor of tape, if there wasn't a baker in the village. "Is er geen baker hier?" I said. "Ja zeker", she replied eagerly; "gistern thuis gekomen".

"Is het huis dicht bij?" I continued. She briskly

came to the door and showed me where to go.

But I'll not detail all our experiences. It was a misunderstanding through out, although the villagers were very kind. The ancient virago was enjoying a siesta in a back-room, when three obliging countrymen ushered us into her dwelling. She was roused unceremoniously — which didn't improve her temper — and hurried frowning and dishevelled into our presence. But never to my dying day shall I forget the Olympian scorn that settled on her brow, when we merely asked for "zes broodjes en een glas melk." She was the most fluent speaker of Dutch I had yet encountered, and very idiomatic; but we didn't stay for much of it. In fact, there was quite a sharp competition between Terence and myself who could be outside the door soonest.

Nor did we pause to make enquiries about routes. We just took the first road and hurried on. More by good luck than good guiding we stumbled on a high-way with tram-rails on it, and felt that help was within reach. Hastily guessing our orientation from the setting sun we trudged on, caught a tram by the merest chance and reached Velp at dark. My cycle was nicely mended; so after due

rest at an Uitspanning we mounted and rode straight to Arnhem.

So disgusted was I with my ill-success in Dutch that I tackled the porters in English. An obliging wit-jas asked me if I would have the day-train. "Rather not," I told him. "There will surely be another train to-night. It's only nine."

The first was a bommel, he said, and would do for the fietsen; but he recommended us to wait for the day-train.

"What! And stay here all night?" I asked.

"No," he explained. "Day-trein will be here soon."

"How is that?" said I. "How in the wide world can a Day-train go at night? or is it because it started from Germany by day-light? You surely don't reckon here by Amerikaansche tijd for the sake of the tourists?"

"You not understand," he explained. "We call it day-trein becos' you pay more —."

"Well!" I interrupted; "that would be a Pay-train, then! Not Day."

"No, no," he said excitedly. "Zis trein go kwik! — not stop — anywheres!"

"But if it doesn't stop, how can we get in?" I asked. "Of moetik belet vragen voor deze Dag-

trein? Geeft de trein belet? You'll need a special kind of ticket, too — perhaps an aanslagsbiljet?"

"No, no; only little bewijsje — kwik trein — bring Restoration — becos' —."

"What? The Restoration! It turns day into night, and brings back Charles II! Go on, please, I can believe anything now!"

"Hallo! is this where you are?" sounded gratefully on our ears. It was van Leeuwen, who had been expecting us all day, after he had heard about our call, from the indignant butler. He had given up all hope of seeing us, but we passed him by in the dark, talking and laughing. He had followed hot-speed to the station — in time to explain the mysteries of the D-trein. My spirits rose. The world was still ruled by reason. Of course we went back with our rescuer. That was the original plan, and I had a grammar to send with him to the Hague.

As he waited, talking to Terence, I recalled the cycles. The wit-jas demurred: "De fietsen zijn al weg."

"Neen, niet zaniken," I told him. "Onmogelijk, hoor! Geen trein is weg. Daar zijn de papiertjes ervan. Pak ze: breng de fietsen mee. Ik weiger je verontschuldigen. Doe wat ik zeg, ik bid U. En niet terug komen met hangende pootjes!"

CHAPTER XIV.

SUPPER AT A BOERDERIJ.

That night, after Terence had retired, I had a confidential talk with van Leeuwen; and I begged of him, as a great favour, to take the Grammar to Kathleen, and — if he had time — give her a little coaching in Dutch. He said he would — to oblige me; and I was pleased to notice that he started, taking Boyton with him, by the earliest possible train. This was the six twenty — a notorious bommel which brought him into the Hague only seventeen minutes earlier than if he had waited for a decent breakfast.

Enderby got to Arnhem about noon, and took us 'in tow' for our cycling tour. We had a glorious week of it in Gelderland under his direction; but there were no adventures worth speaking of. In

ten days we were back at the Residentie, as 'brown as berries and as gay as larks'. It is Terence's phrase, and I give it for what it's worth. But at all events van Leeuwen was gay enough now. His pedagogic labours seemed to suit him, and Kathleen was quite herself again. To hear her laugh now was to imagine that you were back in Kilkenny in the days before the suffragette question was mooted.

Enderby wasn't more than half pleased at the turn things had taken, and consoled himself with motoring. One day — I had only sat down to luncheon — he carried me off for a great run to the islands south of Rotterdam. But the machine broke down twice before we reached Dordrecht, and we had to content ourselves with housing its fragments in a shed, and walking to a *boerderij* where my friend was well known. Here, indeed, we were expected to supper; but we arrived hours before we were due, and *minus* an automobile. This necessitated explanations, which Enderby seemed gracefully enough to make to the family party in the garden. In a shady prieeltje there, they regaled us with "liemonade"; and I occasioned some consternation by rising twice to offer my seat to the

mother and daughter respectively, who came in after I had sat down. They wouldn't take the chair I vacated for them, and appeared to resent my civility. Enderby, too, made me uncomfortable by touching my foot and saying, *sotto voce*, "Take care what you're about, O'Neill".

Baas Willemse was very sympathetic about the mishap to our motor, and strongly recommended the services of a gifted blacksmith of his acquaintance. Indeed before we knew, he had a pony harnessed in a sort of hooded tax-cart, in which he insisted in driving Enderby to this wonderful mechanic, to have the damaged car put to rights. And off they started.

It was only then that I realized the situation. Here was I — without dictionary or phrase-book — left to play the part of intelligent guest, unaided and unprepared. And that was the first time in my life I was 'spending the evening' in a non-English-speaking home. How would I get through it? I did hope that the local Vulcan would be quick.

At first it wasn't so bad. What with remarks about "het prachtige weer" and "het ongeluk", and what with playing with the children, I got along quite smoothly for a while.

I even discoursed a little about the beauty of the afternoon-sunlight and "het schilderachtige van het zomerlandschap". All this was taken in such good part that I went further afield; and noticing a large number of cattle with odd coverings on their backs, I ventured on a comparison which I fancied might interest the company. "In Groot-Brittanje hebben de koeien niet zoo dikwijls overjassen. Mag ik beleefd vragen: gebeurt dat hier van wege de gezelligheid, of van wege de gezondheid, of voor het mooi?"

They were all pleased at this, and gave me a lot of talk about cows — which didn't make me much the wiser.

By violent efforts I recalled some of my old choice phrases, and passed myself somehow. But alas! supper came; and then my real troubles began.

We all adjourned to a binnen-kamer, where an ample spread awaited us. I was given the seat of honour. It was a great pity, all agreed, that Mijnheer Enderby wasn't back: but they thought I might be hungry. Well, I was — and with reason. Nothing to eat since breakfast!

"Thee of chocolaat, Mijnheer?"

"Thee, alstublieft", I said. — And I got it.

"Krentebroodjes?"

"Dank U," I answered pleasantly, and reached

for one in a leisurely manner. You don't like to parade your hunger, you know. Well, I hadn't been prompt enough. A plateful from which I was about to help myself, was removed. The action surprised me, and I looked for a moment at the mother, who had withdrawn the dainties so unexpectedly. She looked at me, slightly ruffled. But no krente-broodjes!

"Wil mijnheer een broodje met vleesch?"

"Oh dank U wel," I said, endeavouring to be quicker. That time I nearly had a slice. But the agile youth, Jaap, who was in charge of the plate, whipped it away too.

No broodjes met vleesch for me! It was very queer.

"Soms een ei?" said the dignified grandmother, in a white cap with gold ornaments. She presided, and did a great deal of the talking; and I could make out that she was the widow of a fisherman or shipowner in a small way, and had once visited Hull. In virtue of having spent a week there, some forty years before, she was regarded evidently by all the rest as an authority on English manners and customs and language and literature.

"Soms een ei?" she pleaded. "Engelshman like egg."

Very much, indeed, I thought, if I could only

get one — call me English or Irish or whatever you like. Fain would I have had an egg off that plate, where she had just put down six or eight, freshly boiled.

Determined to get one, if politeness would assist me, I smiled and bowed and smiled again. "Oh, ik dank U duizendmaal. Ik bewijs volkomen dankbaarheid."

Stunned apparently by my reply, she hesitated.

To encourage her to extend these edibles a trifle nearer, I said, "Alstublieft. Dank U." But she only sighed, and laid the plate out of reach, reproachfully.

No eggs!

"Truitje," she whispered to her granddaughter; "presenteer de schuimpjes."

Truitje didn't say a word, but pushed a schaalje of these light refreshments towards me.

I did secure two; but in a moment they were finished. You see, a schuimpje doesn't last very long, when you are really hungry.

Then the mother complained, courteously, of my slender appetite: "Mijnheer wil niets gebruiken."

"O ja," I interrupted, "integendeel! Heel graag. Alstublieft." And to show I meant it, I asked for another cup of tea. "Mag ik beleefdelijk vragen om een andere kop?" Here I reached cup and saucer towards them.

That certainly created a diversion. They looked blankly at one another, till the grandmother — she was very hearty — called out with a cheerful laugh, "Hé, ja. Dat's waar ook. De Engelsche koppen zijn groot."

"Truitje," she whispered in an audible aside. "Breng even een Engelsche kom. Ze staan in de kast."

"Zie zoo, Mijnheer," she continued to me with a pleasant smile. "Nouw, Mijnheer wil zeker nog wat thee hebben? Nouw, niet bedanken, hoor."

"Oh ja," I replied joyfully. "Schiet op — Als'tu-blijft — dank U. Dank U — heelemaal!"

Holding the tea-pot poised in her hand, she looked at me appealingly, but in doubt. "Wat? heus?" she said.

What was I to do?

I looked at her quite as appealingly, and replied. "Ja, heus! Wel zeker. U hoeft niet te zaniken."

That was decisive. No tea!

The cup, however, was planted down in front of me, upside down. "Het is voor de pronk, zeker," said the grandmother. "Engelsche gewoonte — zeer net."

But conversation flagged. The silence was painful. You could have heard a pin drop. My discreet

attempt to ask for something had failed, and I didn't see exactly how I was to improve upon it.

The mother meantime surveyed my empty plate and empty cup with distinct disapproval, and put out a feeler: "Mijnheer houdt niet van Hollandsche kost?"

'Hollandsch kost', what things cost in Holland — Dutch prices, in other words? Well, they are rather high sometimes. The remark seemed somewhat irrelevant, but it was talk, and therefore welcome. Anything to break that oppressive silence. Eagerly embracing the opportunity of saying something, I responded with cordiality: "Hollandsche kost? Neen. Ik houd niet erg ervan. Dat kan U begrijpen. Ze zijn veels te hoog!"

This well-meant pleasantry was received with such evident disfavour that I hastened to explain. "Ik bedoel dat vele artikelen zijn kostbaar — of kostelijk — mijns bedunkens — in Holland — maar van onberispelijke smaak."

Hardly any response was made to this. — The merest murmur on the part of the grandmother, that was all. But they all looked at me curiously, without saying a word.

Frantically I strove to make an observation in an

easy friendly way, but all my Dutch seemed to have deserted me. — At least all I judged suitable.

Fragments of conversation did float through my agonized brain, but none of them was quite what I needed.

“Ik graauw, ik kefen kweel” was out of the question.

Two proverbs suddenly flashed across my mind, and I gripped them firmly. One was: “Een vogel in de hand is meer waard dan tien in de lucht,” and the tempting parallel offered itself: “Eén broodje in de hand is meer waard dan tien op een boord.” As this aphorism, however, didn’t sound extra civil, I let it pass.

“Deugd en belooning gaan zelden te samen” was the second proverb; and on that model I managed, after due cogitation, to construct a nice harmless phrase. As it expressed what we all knew and could see before our eyes, I felt safe against contradiction, and I knew it couldn’t hurt anybody. This dictum ran: “Koek en boterham gaan dikwijls te samen.”

Perhaps it was owing to the suddenness with which I proclaimed this truth, or to some severity in my manner; but the effect produced on the company was magical.

Jaap dropped his fork with a clatter and said,

"Gunst!" The mother put her hand to her chest, whispering. "Zoo'n schrik!" All looked startled and stopped eating!

To divert the scrutiny of so many eyes, I manufactured talk on the first thing that occurred to me, and, reverting to the Dutch prices said: "Sommige artikelen in Holland zijn duur. Van morgen heb ik een plaat bezichtigd — een poes opgerold over een kannetje melk — de zee in de verte. Prachtig. Maar peper-duur. Tien gulden en een half."

"Wat zegt mijnheer," asked the grandmother, "van de poes en de peper en de tien gulden?"

Assuring her it was merely a 'plaat', but one that was 'erg kostbaar', I grasped at the analogy of the hours of the day, to do full justice to the expensiveness of the picture. If ten o'clock and a half works out at "half-elf-uur," it is not hard to reckon what ten guilders-and-a-half *ought* to be; so I gave it with relish: "En, Juffrouw, wat denkt U? Het kost half-elf-gulden!"

Jaap looked at his watch and shook his head. Then he shook the watch, put it back in his pocket and fastened his eyes again on me.

"Nee, hoor!" exclaimed the mother, who had now begun to help a special dish; "Nee; zoo laat is

het niet. Mijnheer O'Neill, neem een stukje pudding — toe dan — heel verteerbaar."

My plate was passed along, and was heaped up liberally. Though I waited with my thanks as long as I could, I was obliged to intervene when the plate was piled high enough for any two people. "Nouw, ik bedank!" I ejaculated, making my best bow.

But that caused the guillotine to fall once more. With a gesture of impatience Truitje put away my verteerbaar pudding on a remote side-table. Not the least chance of getting it!

I was starving in the midst of plenty!

As my hosts appeared to be as much impressed with the contrast as I was, I endeavoured to smooth things over a little, and set them more at their ease. Making the best of it, with all the careless grace I could muster I bandily assured them that it didn't matter. Het geeft niets — het hindert niet — het komt er niet opaan. Eilieve, zit niet te zeuren!"

But they grew huffy and distant — my phrases didn't do much to relieve the strain — and I was feeling more depressed and famished every minute, when, to my unspeakable relief, up there came the sound of wheels on the gravel, and in a moment I heard Enderby's voice talk-

ing Dutch loudly and confidently in the hall.

The young folks all rushed out to meet him (he is a prime favourite with them) and there was much whispering and laughing and a long confabulation before they came back.

Enderby entered, and greeted the older people merrily: but there was a quizzical frown upon his brow as he sat down near me. "What's all this O'Neill?" he whispered. "Are you ill?"

"I'm as well as could be expected in the circumstances?"

"Circumstances! Why you wouldn't touch the good food they gave you. Not content with despising their cookery you objected to their tea-cups, and pretend that religious scruples keep you from eating until after half-past ten. They think you are some kind of Mohammedan. These kind people are a little hurt, I fear; and I can see they are greatly astonished."

"So am I! I have been as polite as anything, all the time; but though they offer me plenty of everything, if I attempt to help myself, whew! — they whisk the dish away. They may be hurt, as you say; but I can tell you, *I'm starving*. Is there no way to —"

Our conversation was interrupted by the mother's voice, which broke in with the cheery question:

"Mijnheer Enderby houdt wel van Hollandsche kost, niet waar?"

I watched what he would say.

He used two easy words: "Dat spreekt."

Busying herself with plates and spoons, the mother continued: "U neemt een beetje avondeten?"

"Nouw! Of ik!" said Enderby with enthusiasm — and they brought him eatables all sorts.

These dainties caught my eye in spite of myself; and I wondered why none had been given to me. It was now going on to ten; and I had had nothing since early breakfast, except a glass of lemonade, a cup of tea and two small schuimpjes.

The old lady was observant, and must have detected famine in my eye, for with a glance at the clock she called softly to Truitje: "Probeer nouw is."

To me she said, "Wil Mijnheer nog thee?"

The secret was mine now, and I didn't hesitate.

"Of ik!" I replied.

There was a scream of delight from all quarters! My kom was turned right-side up and filled to the brim with fresh warm tea. I was the centre of interest at once. Cupboards flew open on all sides, like pistol-shots, and everybody was waiting to help me. It was who would give me most.

"Ham en een broodje?"

"Of ik!"

"Rookvleesch — en een ei?"

"Of ik!"

The seven lean years were past, now the time of plenty was come.

"Bitterkoekjes en leverworst?" — "Muisjes en karnemelk?" — "Appelbolletjes, wentelteefjes en molsla?" — I refused nothing.

"Of ik" was the "Open Sesame" — the key to unlock all cupboards and all hearts.

I took care to thank nobody for anything, for fear my plate would be removed. Happy laughter was heard on all sides. Smiles beamed on every face. In an instant I had become the most popular man on the island, — at all events with the people in that farm-house. Their hospitality and my hunger had met at last, and come to terms — to the unbounded enthusiasm of all.

Meantime Enderby had communicated to them the fact that I was an Irishman; and I overheard someone venture on the singular criticism: "De Ieren zijn zoo lief voor elkaar! Hij gebruikt niets als zijn vriend niet bij is."

"Hé, wat lief!" said Baas Willemse.

"Innig!" whispered the grandmother, smiling.

"Leuk", answered the mother.

"Aardig", said some one else.

"Typisch", exclaimed Truitje.

A grumble fell on our ears: "Wat gek!"

It was Jaap.

Truitje talked on one side of Enderby; Jaap talked on the other. Enderby smiled, then sniggered, then laughed; and finally, laying down his knife and fork, he looked at me, and leaned back in his chair and positively roared.

"Well, what's the matter?" I asked austere-ly.

"She says it's touching to see your affection for me. You looked so melancholy when I was away, as if you were longing for something — or crossed in love — or disappointed! You've won their hearts, at last, my boy, not a doubt of it. Still, don't overdo that phrase, now that you've got it. Jaap here has a story about an Irish terrier in Drenthe that refused to eat anything for three days, when its master was away in Amsterdam. But he adds that the terrier made up for it, by eating everything it could, when its master came back. I can see that you are going to achieve a reputation that will outrival that of your canine

compatriot, unless you have a care. Be a bit cautious, please."

Here Jaap, dimly apprehending that Enderby was speaking about him, performed a mystic rite that puzzled me extremely.

Pretending to sharpen an imaginary pencil on his forefinger he held it towards us and cried, "Sliep uit."

"What on earth is that?" I asked Enderby — who, however, could only tell me that it was intended as a roguish taunt — Jaap was always a schelm — but the phrase was otherwise meaningless.

As such I jotted it down at once in my notebook for future use.

From these experiences in the boerderij I was able to deduce an important general principle of practical value.

If you want anything in Holland never say "thank you", until the object is firmly in your grasp. Then you may be as civil as you like. But before you get hold of it, you are only safe if you say, "If I".

In the Dutch language premature thanks are equivalent to a refusal; so you'd better keep your gratitude out of sight.

Well, I had won all hearts here in virtue of my discoveries. As we were going away the grandmother gave me a second Good-bye, shaking me warmly by both hands. "Heeft mijnheer zich goed geamuseerd?" she enquired.

"Kostelijk — Uitstekend — Nouw!" was my prompt reply, for I had expected that query.

"Wat spreekt mijnheer nouw makkelijk Hollandsch!" she exclaimed.

"Gunst, ja", was my retort. "Ik heb zoo'n pret gehad! Onbetaalbaar!"

But I caught Jaap's eye; it was critical; so to pay back the youth for his terrier-story I took out my pencil, sharpened it in full view of them all and said, "Sliep uit, Jaap; je bent een schelm".

With that they all cheered, young and old, saying "Net, Mijnheer, net!"

"Tot weerziens!" laughed the grandmother shaking hands again. "Kom spoedig terug".

"Ja hoor; dat spreekt."

"Belooft u?" she repeated, before she let me go.

I pulled myself together, and gave a parting salvo: "Ja, zeker — Stellig — Och kom! — Niet zaniken — Reken er op! — Of ik!!"

We drove away in a perfect tornado of applause.

EPILOGUE.

On reaching my rooms at Ferdinand Bolstraat 66*a*, the landlady greeted me with respectful effusion and told me that Jan was as good as cured, though the wounded arm would remain stiff for a good while, she feared. She was loud in the praises of the Engelsche juffrouw and her proficiency in Dutch; and (sinking her voice confidentially) Mijnheer van Leeuwen had left a letter for me upstairs.

"Boyton", I thought, as I climbed those forty nine precipitous steps that led to my room, "I hope you have done your duty."

And he had.

Van Leeuwen wrote that he would prepare me for a great surprise! It was yet a profound secret; but, — well, in fact — that is to say — he was engaged to my cousin Kathleen. They had discov-

ered mutual sympathies and affinities over the study of Dutch — to which language now my cousin was devoting her serious attention. By the by they had been delighted with that monograph of mine. And the queer Grammar was useful. (I should think so!)

He said that he could well imagine my astonished looks when I got this news about his attachment! Now confess, he concluded, that you hadn't the ghost of a suspicion as to what was coming?

"Oh hadn't I just?" I soliloquized, "Well; there's only one thing, my dear fellow, to say to all that; And I really must say it in Dutch: Of ik?"

CONTENTS.

	Page.
CHAPTER I.	
Where did O'Neills' Dutch come from? . . .	1
CHAPTER II.	
Some Characteristics of the Compendious Guide to Dutch	6
CHAPTER III.	
How O'Neill learnt to pronounce	14
CHAPTER IV.	
An Interlude and an Application	17
CHAPTER V.	
The Wegwijzer on Dutch Syntax	24
CHAPTER VI.	
The Grammatical Caress	36
CHAPTER VII.	
A Gossipy Letter	41

CHAPTER VIII.

The Surprises of the Maas	50
-------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER IX.

The Accident and the Devoted Nurse . . .	61
--	----

CHAPTER X.

Gossip and Diplomacy	70
--------------------------------	----

CHAPTER XI.

A Study in Character	77
--------------------------------	----

CHAPTER XII.

Belet!	90
------------------	----

CHAPTER XIII.

The Day-train	95
-------------------------	----

CHAPTER XIV.

Supper at a Boerderij	110
---------------------------------	-----

EPILOGUE	117
--------------------	-----

